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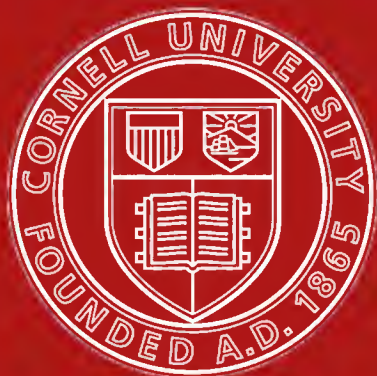
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The Rosciad and The apology.



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THE ROSCIAD.

Four hundred copies printed.

No: 192.



Charles Churchill.

R O S C I A D

AND

THE APOLOGY.

BY

CHARLES CHURCHILL.

EDITED BY ROBERT W. LOWE.

WITH EIGHT ILLUSTRATIONS.



LONDON :

LAWRENCE AND BULLEN,

169, NEW BOND STREET,

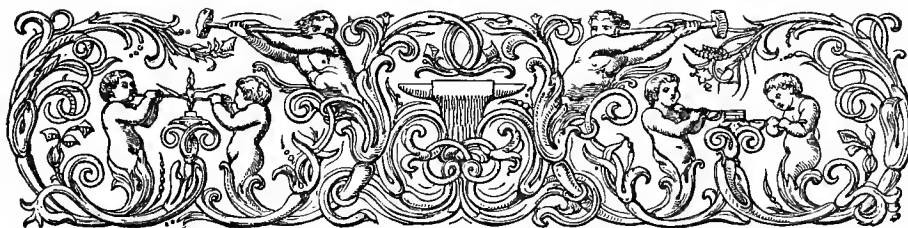
1891.

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PREFATORY NOTE.

In this edition, for the first time, the suppressed passages in the *Rosciad* are restored, and will be found in the Notes; and the alterations which the poet made in the various editions are carefully pointed out.



THE STORY OF THE "ROSCIAD."

AS a parson Churchill was not a success. Whether or not we accept the story of his Welsh Curacy, with its attendant cider-selling and consequent bankruptcy, we can easily believe that "to pray and starve on forty pounds a year" was not congenial to a man of his physique and temperament. This Welsh curacy has been treated by Mr. Forster as a myth; but, for my own part, I cannot dismiss the evidence in its favour so lightly, for the anonymous biographer of Churchill, on whose authority the story rests, seems to have written with considerable knowledge of his subject. It is certainly a ludicrous picture which he paints of the clerical cider-dealer and his clients. "'Parson, bring me a mug of the right sort,' cries one. 'This is excellent stuff, i' faith,' cries another. 'I pray you now, Mr. John Jones, I peseech you, and intrete you now to tell me, look you, if you do not think this cyder is better than Lewis Morgan ap Thomas's,' asked another. In short they all agreed the parson's cider was

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE.—Charles Churchill was born in Vine Street, Westminster, in February, 1731, and was educated at Westminster School. His father, the Rev. Charles Churchill, designed him for the Church, and though he did not study at either University, he was, about 1752, ordained a deacon and got a curacy in Somersetshire. In 1758, on the death of his father, he succeeded him in his charge of St. John's, Westminster. But he had no love for the Church, and, after the success of the *Rosciad*, gave up his charge, and joined the ranks of the laity. He became the associate of the notorious John Wilkes, to whose *North Briton* he was a powerful contributor, and in whose set he led a dissipated and more or less disreputable life. He died at Boulogne on 4th November, 1764, and was buried in the old churchyard of St. Martin's, Dover. In addition to the *Rosciad* and *Apology*, he published in 1761, *Night*; in 1762-1763, *The Ghosts*; in 1763, *The Prophecy of Famine*, *An Epistle to Hogarth*, *The Conference*, *The Duellist*, and *The Author*; in 1764, *Gotham*, *The Candidate*, *The Farewell*, *The Times*, and *Independence*. He left also two unfinished poems, *The Journey*, and *A Dedication to Warburton*.

attack on them, and proclaiming their own worthiness and excellence. Davies, with some quaintness, relates how those who were most hurt pretended to be insensible to their own injuries, but deeply distressed at the injustice done to their fellow-actors. "Why," said one of these disinterested persons, "should this man attack Mr. Havard? I am not at all concerned for myself, but what has poor Billy Havard done that he must be treated so cruelly?" "And pray," said one who heard this mock declaration of benevolence, "what has Mr. Havard done, that he cannot bear his misfortunes as well as another?"

Richard Yates, a famous low comedian, was one of the angriest of the players. Not only had the satirist made fun of his shortness of memory, but he had dared to censure his wife. Now Yates, like a good husband, had a great admiration for his wife's powers. It is said that on her benefit night he might be seen in the gallery, begging the people to sit closer, to make room for as many as possible, because "Mrs. Yates was the greatest actress in the world, and had only one night in the year." The enraged husband invited Churchill to meet him at a tavern, either for the purpose of remonstrating with him, or it may be, of chastising him; but George Garrick, brother of the manager, heard of their meeting, and, making one of the party, succeeded in reconciling them over a bottle. Yates, however, continued to resent Churchill's criticism in a sufficiently ludicrous way. The great fault with which he was charged was an occasional forgetfulness of his part, to hide which he was in the habit of repeating a sentence two or three times over, prefacing his repetition with "Hark ye! Hark ye!" After Churchill had held up this habit to ridicule, Yates courageously repeated the very words which his satirist had mentioned, to show his contempt for his critic. As Davies says, it amused those who knew the circumstances to see the poet and the player bully one another most manfully with their looks, as the actor ejaculated, "Hark ye! Hark ye!" while the poet sat in his usual seat scowling and fuming.

Samuel Foote, who lived by attacking and libelling others, was furious at Churchill's criticism. He wrote, but had not the courage to publish, a prose lampoon on the poet and his friend Lloyd, in which, with his usual fondness for alliteration, he called Churchill "the clumsy curate of Clapham." Of the other players, some were so furious that they threatened to give their critic a thrashing; but he, confident in his own strength of muscle, bought a huge cudgel to defend himself with, and troubled himself no further about them: others again allowed the truth of the criticism, or cared nothing for it. Of the latter class was the facetious Ned Shuter, who, "out of revenge, got very merry with the poet." Of the former was David Ross, who confessed that the accusation of indolence

was perfectly just ; and I may also add Woodward, in virtue of a letter from Wilkes to Churchill, which I found among the Wilkes manuscripts in the British Museum. In this Wilkes, writing from Paris, in August 1764, to "My dearest Mr. Churchill," says : "Mr. Woodward, who brought me letters from England, is now on his return, and earnestly begs that I wou'd give him a line to you. He talks in the highest terms of your skill in his business, and of the infinite desire he has to amend by the useful hints you are capable of giving him. I leave him therefore to you as the great Rosciadist to make him more than master in the science of grimace."

The player who felt Churchill's satire most seems to have been poor Tom Davies, who is said to have quitted the stage because of it. If this indeed be so, all must concur in Dr. Johnson's opinion : "What a man is he, who is to be driven from the stage by a line? Another line would have driven him from his shop." In the *Garrick Correspondence* we find proof of Davies's fear of Churchill. He made, it seems, a blunder in *Cymbeline*, which disconcerted Garrick, and the player's apology is, "I did attribute it to my accidentally seeing Mr. Churchill in the pit." Poor Davies's retirement from the stage to devote his whole attention to his book-selling business ended in disaster, for he became absolutely penniless, and his "very pretty wife," as Churchill calls her, ended her days in a workhouse.

A strong proof of the effect of the *Rosciad* is furnished by Tate Wilkinson, who, so long as thirty years after its publication, shows intense anxiety to prove that Churchill had changed his opinion as to his powers of mimicry. Tate, according to his own account, was playing Bayes at the Haymarket in 1763, and the poet was there, in very doubtful female company. Wilkinson's imitation of Holland was so good that, "Mr. Churchill, after laughing to a very violent degree, most vociferously encored the speech ;" and he then recanted the accusation which had apparently stuck in Tate's throat. He said, "he was convinced I was not a 'mimic's mimic,' for the imitations were palpably my own." It may also be mentioned, as showing the importance attached to Churchill's criticism, that John Moody, who is highly praised in the *Rosciad*, considered the poet's lines "his passport to the Temple of Fame."

One of the few agreeable incidents connected with the *Rosciad* has reference to David Ross, who has just been mentioned. Before he saw the poem he was told that it was a biting attack upon the actors, and that he himself was not spared. To which he happily replied by quoting the words of Cato :

"I should have blush'd if Cato's house had stood
Secure, and flourish'd in a Civil War."

But beyond its criticism and ridicule of the faults of the various actors, the *Rosciad* had a very distinct object—the glorification of the greatest actor of the day, David Garrick—and in the pursuit of this object Churchill is occasionally most unjust to Garrick's rivals. On the whole, it cannot be questioned that the prevailing characteristic of the *Rosciad* was fairness. The author might be wrong in his opinions, but they were in nearly every case opinions which he no doubt honestly held. Even poor Tom Davies admitted, twenty years after the poet's death, that he was a "generous and fair satirist." But in his treatment of the three greatest rivals of "Little Davy" he allowed his enthusiastic partisanship (for Churchill must always "take a side") to outrun his sense of justice.

The oldest of Garrick's rivals was James Quin, who was born in 1693, and had been on the stage since 1715. He was of the School of Betterton, which was now old-fashioned. The solemnity of utterance which in Betterton had awed his fellow-actors, and chained the attention of even the most frivolous spectator, had in two generations of imitators become a manner, reproducing the mechanism of his art, while the spirit had fled. Garrick introduced a lighter and more natural tone into the speaking of verse and prose; as Edmund Kean did at the beginning of this century, and as Henry Irving has done in our own day. But we should never think of declaring that John Kemble was a mere elocutionist, because of his formal utterance; or of denying Samuel Phelps's claims to be a great actor, because his delivery was more measured than our modern tastes approved. Yet this is precisely what Churchill did in the case of Quin. "He is an elocutionist—therefore he is no actor," is virtually his argument; and he puts out of sight what he must have known, that in Brutus, Henry the Eighth, and many characters requiring dignity, Quin was immeasurably superior to Garrick. In comedy again he had his line which Garrick could not touch. He was admirable in the *Spanish Friar*, in Sir John Brute (as Churchill sneeringly allows), in Congreve's *Old Bachelor*, in the *Plain Dealer*, and, above all, in Falstaff, of whom he was undoubtedly one of the best representatives our stage has ever seen.

As Quin had retired from the stage nearly ten years before the *Rosciad* was written, there was even less excuse for dragging him at the tail of Garrick's triumphant chariot than existed in the case of Barry and Mossop. For the former of these especially, Garrick cherished a wholesome dread. Endowed by nature with a noble figure, a handsome and expressive face, and a voice of great sweetness and compass, Spranger Barry had every physical quality to fit him for heroes and lovers. He had the great advantage over Garrick of being nearly six inches taller. Garrick, on the other hand, towered above him in mental

endowment. But, although we know that in judgment Barry was the inferior, and that his acting had little or no claim to subtlety, we must yet remember that in many characters of the highest rank he fairly held his own against Garrick. To take only two instances—his Othello was as splendidly moving a performance as Garrick's was ineffective ; and his Romeo was no doubt better than his rival's—for I fancy there was very sound criticism in the saying of the lady of fashion who declared that, had she been Juliet, she would have wished Garrick to leap up into the balcony beside her, but she would herself have jumped down to Barry. Tate Wilkinson, too, was of the same opinion. "Sir," said he, "Barry, Sir, was as much superior to Garrick in Romeo, as York Minster is to a Methodist Chapel."

Of course all this is a matter of opinion, and Churchill was quite justified in maintaining that Barry was wrong "in elocution, action, character," if he thought so. But where he shows unfairness is in such a point as the selection of Lear for special mention, a character which was among Garrick's very grandest parts, but not among Barry's best.

The poet's partiality is even more apparent in his slashing attack on Henry Mossop, whose stiffness and awkwardness he mercilessly ridicules. No one would ever imagine from the ludicrous description of this unfortunate player that he held a rank only second to Garrick himself on the stage. In parts of vehemence and rage he was unequalled ; and in characters of solemnity and gravity, his acting was admirable. He must have been no mere machine who won distinction in such parts as Zanga, Richard the Third, the Duke in *Measure for Measure*, King John, and Hotspur.

There is not the slightest reason to believe that Churchill's enthusiastic championship of Garrick arose from any other cause than a sincere conviction that he was immeasurably superior to all his rivals. Indeed, there seems to be no doubt that even the name of the poet was unknown to the actor. Under these circumstances it is natural that we should be curious to know how Garrick received the praise of his unknown panegyrist ; and, it must be confessed, the answer to our query is somewhat disappointing. Instead of realizing, and rejoicing, that a monument had been raised to him more lasting than marble, he pooh-poohed the critic's praises, and affected to believe that they were given for no higher reason than to gain the freedom of the theatre. Busy tongues promptly carried the gossip to Churchill, and he retaliated by a few warning lines in the *Apology*, which, we can well believe, brought Garrick to his senses. There are conflicting accounts as to the effect of these lines. Davies says that Garrick wrote a whining apology to Churchill, which, apparently, he did not send ; but

all that we positively know is that the actor wrote to Lloyd a manly and judicious letter (printed in the *Garrick Correspondence*, ii. 337), which no doubt served the purpose of bringing about an understanding between the poet and player.

At any rate Garrick and Churchill were completely reconciled. This we have under the poet's own hand in the letters preserved for us in the *Garrick Correspondence*. The first of Churchill's epistles is characteristic of the man, whose irregularity and dissipation were so notorious :

"MY DEAR MR. GARRICK,

"Half drunk—half mad—and quite stripped of all my money, I should be much obliged if you would enclose and send by the bearer five pieces, by way of adding to favours already received by

Yours sincerely,

CHARLES CHURCHILL."

It may be said that borrowing money from a man does not necessarily imply much friendship for him, but, in Churchill's case, I think it does. The poet was a man of transparent honesty and right feeling, and I feel assured that he would have undergone any extremity rather than ask money from one whom he did not sincerely like and respect. And this was not the only time he borrowed from Garrick, as witness another letter, which is, like the former, undated, but must have been written about September, 1763.

"Wednesday night.

"DEAR GARRICK,

"I am this moment come to town, or would have sent to you sooner.—Poor Garnier ! I much lament that such men should die. Remember me in Italy, and know me, with the greatest sincerity,

"Ever yours,

"C. CHURCHILL."

"Thursday morning, five.

"I heartily beg pardon for breaking time with you, but the reason was this. The above was written whilst my man was gone for the notes. On his return I learned that my mother had lost or mislaid one of twenty pounds. The search after that made it impossible for me to send last night ; and the not finding it, together with your haste, hath made me ten pounds worse than my word, which will not, I hope, be material."

Nor are these letters the only proofs of the friendship that subsisted between Garrick and Churchill. The poet, in the opening lines of *The Candidate*, paid a graceful tribute to the actor ; but the strongest manifestation of his goodwill was his furious attack, in the eighth edition of the *Rosciad*, on Garrick's enemy, the "Fribble" Fitzpatrick. This despicable creature was a man of some property who aspired to be a wit and critic. He was a frequenter of the Bedford Coffee House, and a constant theatre-goer, and soon made the acquaintance of

Garrick, for whom he for some time professed the greatest friendship. For some unknown reason he suddenly turned against Garrick, and became his bitter enemy. He abused him so viciously in the *Craftsman* newspaper, that Garrick responded by a poem entitled *The Fribbleriad* (1761), in which Fitzpatrick and his fellow "Fribbles" were held up to unsparing ridicule. These Fribbles were a race of which we have no counterpart now. They seem to have carried effeminacy of manner to a pitch we can scarcely realize; and it is difficult to judge exactly how much of the satire aimed at them was truth, and how much caricature. In a pamphlet entitled *The Pretty Gentleman*, a specimen of their talk and conduct is given, which I quote, confessing, however, my inability to discriminate between what is fact, and what is exaggeration.

"Some Time ago, four or five of these elegant youths were invited to dine at Lady Betty —'s. The first Dish that was served up happened to be a Leg of *Lamb and Spinage*; at the sight of which *Fannius* instantly fainted away. 'Oh! Lard!' says *Timidulus*, 'fetch some Draps.'—'Take away the Dish,' cried *Molliculo*—'Perhaps he has some 'Tipathy to Lamb.' 'No, no,' replies *Tenellus*, 'he has evermore his Hysterics at this Time of the Year.—Let him alone, for He'vns sake! don't croud about 'm;—he'll come to himself presently.'—'Fetch a little Peppermint-water,' says *Cottilus*, 'it is—'

"By this Time, *Fannius* finding his Spirits return, gently lifted up his Head,—and after half a Dozen Sighs—'Heigh! Hoh! where am I!—Well—I protest—I am quite—ashamed to—to—But—do you know, whenever I see a Leg of *Lamb and Spinage*, it is so like — that it puts me in mind of—[*Here he burst into a Flood of Tears*].—It puts me in mind of my dear—dear bitch *Chloe*—sunning herself upon a *Grass-Plot!*' 'What a dull Creter was I,' replied the Lady, 'that I could not think of this! . . .'

"'Oh dear Me'me!' replied *Fannius*—'Not a Word more, I entreat you.—Your favour is an Antidote against all Misfortunes.' Upon this he dried up his Tears; the company sat down again, and all was well."

Of these poor creatures Fitzpatrick was apparently a leader, and the ridicule heaped upon him in the *Fribbleriad* effectually extinguished him for a time. But his malice found vent two years later, when he headed a formidable riot against Garrick, in the course of which much damage was done to Drury Lane Theatre. The object of the dispute was to force the theatre to accept half price after the third act of new plays as well as old; and the manager had to give way. Garrick himself attempted no further punishment of Fitzpatrick, but Churchill in the next edition of the *Rosciad*, gibbeted him in lines which will hand down his name to contempt as long as English literature lasts. As William Cooke says in his *Memoirs of Macklin*, Fitzpatrick was depicted "as one of the very worms of the creation."

So far we have considered the effects of the *Rosciad* from a purely theatrical standpoint; but it has a literary history no less interesting. As has been related, it was published anonymously on the 14th March, 1761. At the end of that

month the *Critical Review* for March (for magazines were then published at the end of the month whose name they bore), contained an unfavourable criticism, which seems to have roused Churchill to fury. To us reading it now this review (which will be found at page 55 of the present edition,) seems sufficiently mild, its only objectionable point being its insinuations regarding the authorship of the *Rosciad*. The triumvirate to whom it attributed the poem was George Colman the Elder, Robert Lloyd, and Bonnel Thornton. Colman, who was afterwards well known as a dramatist and as manager of the Haymarket Theatre, had just made his first great success with *The Jealous Wife*, to which comedy more than one allusion is made in the *Rosciad*. Lloyd had been sometime an usher in Westminster School, but had given up that drudgery, and now trusted to his pen for a subsistence. In his new calling he was fairly successful, and, as has always been supposed, it was the hit made by his poem, *The Actor*, that suggested to Churchill his more famous satire on the players. But Lloyd was of dissipated habits, and before long he landed in the Fleet; imprisonment in which, however, he declared to be less intolerable than the condition of usher at Westminster School. Thornton was a writer of humorous verses, and a versatile contributor to the magazines and newspapers.

Colman and Lloyd promptly contradicted the statement of the *Critical Review*; the former advertising his contradiction in the *St. James's Chronicle* of 2 April, 1761, and the latter in the same paper's next issue, that of 4 April; in which also appeared a poem by Lloyd, attacking the Reviewers. It was addressed to Colman, and opened with a satirical allusion to the doctrine that it was wrong to attack the defenceless actors:

“ Dear Sir, for heaven's sake, forbear !
Why that's a *Gentleman*—a *Play'r* ;
And play'rs you know are desp'rate things,
Lords, Heroes, Constables, and Kings.
Vent where you will your honest rage ;
But spare reflections on—the Stage.”

After the publication of these denials, the *Critical Review*, in its issue for April, withdrew its insinuations. But its withdrawal was not particularly frank or gracious, and did not save it from the sledge hammer attack which Churchill made on it in his *Apology, Addressed to the Critical Reviewers*, published about the middle of May, 1761. In this poem, Smollett, who was editor of the *Critical Review*, and Arthur Murphy, who had nothing whatever to do with it, were the persons chiefly attacked. Smollett in a letter to Garrick

denied the charge of writing the article, a disclaimer repeated in the notice of the *Apology* which appeared in the May issue of the *Critical Review*. And with this Smollett disappears from the controversy ; but it is otherwise with Murphy, who kept up a sort of running fight with Churchill and his friends for some time. The poet's contribution to the battle was the description of Murphy which was inserted in the later editions of the *Rosciad*, ridiculing his personal appearance, and gloating over the fact that he had failed as an actor ; for Murphy had tried his fortune on the stage, and been a member of Garrick's company, before he became a dramatist. Murphy's chief offensive weapon—offensive in every sense of the word—was an *Ode to the Naiads of Fleet Ditch*, a production so coarse that it is difficult to imagine a decent man, as Murphy undoubtedly was, producing such filthy trash. Some idea of its delicate humour may be gathered from the fact that he refers to Churchill as "Charley Dunghill." Its opening lines, too, may be quoted, as indicating its tone :

"Ye nut-brown Naiads of that sable Flood,
To which auxiliar Sewers their Homage pay,
And little Rills, meand'ring o'er the Mud,
Wind from a thousand Urinals their Way."

To this precious *Ode* a still coarser response was made by some supporter of Churchill, without, I venture to hope, the poet's knowledge or approval. It was entitled *The Murphiad*, and was of such an offensive character that quotation from it, or even a general description of it, is impossible. Its atmosphere is one of "Filth and Cloacina's yellow Reign"—to quote the *Ode to the Naiads*. To it Murphy replied in *The Examiner*, in which Churchill and Lloyd are lustily abused. Before leaving this unsavoury quarrel it may be as well to mention that some of its virulence must be attributed to political enmity ; for Murphy was a vehement supporter of Lord Bute, who was to Churchill and his friends the incarnation of evil.

Of the other pamphlets which were published attacking Churchill the most vigorous was the (prose) *Churchiliad*, of the style of which the following extract will give some idea :

"The scheme [of the *Rosciad*] is truly laudable ; for who shall dare to blame him, tho' he did let two bodies wait in the church some few hours for him to read the burial service ? Was he not more materially employed in the orchestra of Drury Lane Theatre, taking minutes of Mr. Sheridan's three steps, backward and forward, in King John ? . . . and what could it signify to the dead to be buried by a French protestant, who could not read a word of English ? Was he not lowering the insolent pride of a set of people who had the impudence to dine upon *fish* and *fowls* in a superb apartment, while he was forced to dart into a cellar in St. Giles's, where the knives

xviii THE STORY OF THE ROSCIAD.

and forks are chained to the table, for fear the company should steal them, and there dine voluptuously upon ox-cheek ?”

The *Anti-Rosciad* was a rhymed attack of the most unpoetical nature, as witness these lines, which Envy speaks to Churchill :

“ All Peace should not be banish’d from thy Breast,
She cry’d, thy Ipse dixit is revers’d.”

The quarrel produced three *Epistles*—an *Epistle to Churchill* by Lloyd ; another with the same title by Hayes ; and an anonymous *Epistle to the Author of the Rosciad and Apology*. It also produced *The Retort*, by Thomas Vaughan ; *The Muses’ Advice*, by W. Woty ; *The Four Farthing Candles, a Satire* ; *The Mimic*, an anonymous adulation of Foote ; and a poem called the *Triumvirate, a Poetical Portrait*, of which the following lines will indicate the tone ;

“ For want of Motto take the Names
Of those whom Infamy proclaims,
Who have the World’s Contempt employ’d,
By Titles, C——ll, C——n, L——d.”

Of none of these attacks did Churchill take the slightest notice, and their only effect was to advertise the *Rosciad* and *Apology*, and thus put more money in the poet’s purse. The circulation of these poems must have been very large. Four editions of the *Rosciad* were published in three months, and eight in two years. Its price, too, increased materially, from one shilling, the cost of the first edition, to one shilling and sixpence for the second, and half-a-crown for some of the later editions. Altogether Churchill probably gained nearly a thousand pounds by the *Rosciad* and *Apology* ; and the marvellous success of these, his first ventures, caused him to proclaim publicly his preference for the literary calling over that which he first exercised. He threw off his clerical garb, and appeared as a man about town in the gorgeous panoply of “ a blue coat with metal buttons, a gold-laced waistcoat, a gold-laced hat, and ruffles.” And here we leave him, for with the *Apology* ended his connection with the stage and the players. His great talents were afterwards devoted to fighting political battles against ignoble foes, under the command of a leader, John Wilkes, more ignoble, if that were possible, than the time-serving politicians who were his enemies.

R. W. L.

T H E
R O S C I A D.

B Y
T H E A U T H O R.



Unknowing, and unknown, the hardy Muse
Boldly defies all mean and partial views;
With honest Freedom plays the Critic's part,
And praises, as she censures, from the Heart.



L O N D O N:
Printed for the AUTHOR, and sold by W. FLEXNEY,
near Gray's-Inn-Gate, Holborn.

MDCCLXI.



THE ROSCIAD.

ROSCIUS deceas'd, each high aspiring Play'r
Push'd all his int'rest for the vacant Chair :
The buskin'd Heroes of the mimic stage
No longer whine in love, and rant in rage ;
The monarch quits his throne, and condescends
Humbly to court the favour of his friends ;
For pity's sake tells undeserv'd mishaps,
And, their applause to gain, recounts his claps.
Thus the victorious chiefs of ancient Rome,
To win the mob, a suppliant's form assume,
In pompous strain fight o'er th' extinguish'd war,
And shew where Honour bled in ev'ry scar.

But though bare Merit might in Rome appear
The strongest plea for favour, 'tis not here ;
We form our judgment in another way ;
And they will best succeed, who best can pay :
Those, who would gain the votes of British tribes,
Must add to force of Merit, force of bribes.

What can an actor give ? in ev'ry age
 Cash hath been rudely banish'd from the stage ;
 Monarchs themselves, to grief of ev'ry play'r,
 Appear as often as their image there :
 They can't, like candidate for other seat,
 Pour seas of wine, and mountains raise of meat.
 Wine ! they could bribe you with the world as soon,
 And of roast beef, they only know the tune :
 But what they have they give ; could Clive do more,
 Though for each million he had brought home four ?¹

Shuter keeps open house at Southwark fair,
 And hopes the friends of humour will be there ;
 In Smithfield, Yates prepares the rival treat
 For those who laughter love, instead of meat.²
 Foote, at Old House, for even Foote will be
 In self-conceit an actor, bribes with tea ;³
 Which Wilkinson at second-hand receives,
 And at the New,⁴ pours water on the leaves.

¹ Clive returned from India in 1760, and seems at once to have set about cultivating parliamentary interest, which, in the good old times, meant plentifully spending money in bribery.

² At Southwark and Bartholomew Fairs comedians of established reputation did not think it beneath their dignity to have booths, in which they presented Drolls to the holiday folks. Shuter and Yates were well known in this way.

³ To avoid troublesome questions about a license, Foote at one time announced his entertainments under the title of "giving tea"—at playhouse prices. Churchill's happy phrase of "pouring water on the leaves" refers to Wilkinson's close imitations of Foote's entertainments.

⁴ The Old House is Drury Lane; the New, Covent Garden, which was of

The Town divided, each runs sev'ral ways,
 As passion, humour, int'rest, party sways.
 Things of no moment, colour of the hair,
 Shape of a leg, complexion brown or fair,
 A dress well chosen, or a patch misplac'd,
 Conciliate favour, or create distaste.

From galleries loud peals of laughter roll,
 And thunder Shuter's praises,—he's so droll ;
 Embox'd, the ladies must have something smart,
 Palmer !¹ Oh ! Palmer tops the janty part.
 Seated in pit, the dwarf, with aching eyes,
 Looks up, and vows that Barry's out of size ;
 Whilst to six feet the vig'rous stripling grown,
 Declares that Garrick is another Coan.²

When place of Judgment is by Whim supply'd,
 And our opinions have their rise in Pride ;
 When, in discoursing on each mimic elf,
 We praise and censure with an eye to self ;

comparatively recent construction. In 1760-1761 Foote was playing at the former, Wilkinson at the latter.

¹ John Palmer [1728-1768] was an excellent actor of coxcombs. He must not be confused with his better known successor, who was the original Joseph Surface. Churchill made a second allusion to Palmer in the "Rosciad" but, as will be seen, suppressed the passage.

² Coan was a famous dwarf. He was exhibited at a tavern in Five Fields, Chelsea, of which his portrait was the sign. The keeper of the tavern was one Pinchbeck, one of three brothers who invented the metal which bears their name.

All must meet friends, and Ackman¹ bids as fair
In such a court, as Garrick, for the Chair.

At length agreed, all squabbles to decide,
By some one judge the cause was to be try'd;
But this their squabbles did afresh renew,
Who should be judge in such a trial :—Who?

For Johnson some, but Johnson, it was fear'd,
Would be too grave; and Sterne too gay appear'd;²
Others for Francklin³ voted: but 'twas known,
He sicken'd at all triumphs but his own;
For Colman many, but the peevish tongue
Of prudent Age found out that he was Young.
For Murphy some few pilf'ring wits declar'd,
Whilst Folly clapp'd her hands, and Wisdom star'd.

¹ Ackman was an unimportant actor at Drury Lane, of whom John Taylor records that he was a highly respectable individual personally—"he never associated with the lower actors in public-houses, but kept up a connexion with respectable tradesmen, gentlemen of the law, and medical men"—and that his solitary good part was Kate Matchlock in *The Funeral*.

² Up to and including the sixth edition, two lines on Murphy followed here:—

"Some call'd for M—rp—y, but that sound soon dy'd,
And Desart Island rang on ev'ry side:"

an allusion to Murphy's play of that name. In the seventh edition the assault on Murphy was developed; these two lines disappeared; and the scathing attack on him and Wedderburne beginning: "For Murphy some few pilf'ring wits declar'd" and ending "And let Success for once attend Desert," was inserted.

³ Dr. Thomas Francklin was at this time known chiefly as the translator of Sophocles; his plays, *The Earl of Warwick*, *Orestes*, etc., were of later date.

To mischief train'd, e'en from his mother's womb,
 Grown old in fraud, tho' yet in manhood's bloom,
 Adopting arts,¹ by which gay villains rise,
 And reach the heights, which honest men despise ;
 Mute at the bar, and in the senate loud,
 Dull 'mongst the dullest, proudest of the proud ;
 A pert, prim, Prater of the northern race,
 Guilt in his heart, and famine in his face,²
 Stood forth,—and thrice he wav'd his lilly hand—
 And thrice he twirl'd his Tye—thrice strok'd his band—

“ At Friendship's call ” (thus oft with trait'rous aim,
 Men, void of faith, usurp faith's sacred name)
 “ At Friendship's call I come, by Murphy sent,
 “ Who thus by me developes his intent.
 “ But lest, transfus'd, the Spirit shall be lost,
 “ That Spirit, which in storms of Rhet'ric tost,
 “ Bounces about, and flies like bottled beer,
 “ In his own words his own intentions hear.

“ ‘ Thanks to my friends.—But to vile fortunes born,
 “ No robes of fur these shoulders must adorn.
 “ Vain your applause, no aid from thence I draw ;
 “ Vain all my wit, for what is wit in law ?

¹ Seventh edition reads “ Curs'd with those arts.”

² This fierce description is aimed at Alexander Wedderburne, afterwards Baron Loughborough, and ultimately Earl Rosslyn, who was a warm friend of Murphy. Many years later than this, he was nicknamed *Starvation Wedderburne* by John Wilkes.

“ Twice (curs’d rememb’rance !) twice I strove to gain
 “ Admittance ’mongst the law-instructed train,
 “ Who, in the Temple and Gray’s-Inn, prepare
 “ For client’s wretched feet the legal snare ;
 “ Dead to those arts, which polish and refine,
 “ Deaf to all worth, because that worth was Mine,
 “ Twice did those blockheads startle at my name,
 “ And foul rejection gave me up to shame.¹
 “ To laws and lawyers then I bad adieu,
 “ And plans of far more lib’ral note pursue.
 “ Who will may be a Judge—my kindling breast
 “ Burns for that Chair which Roscius once possess’d.
 “ Here give your votes, your int’rest here exert,
 “ And let Success for once attend Desert.’ ”

With sleek appearance, and with ambling pace,
 And, type of vacant head, with vacant face,
 The Proteus Hill put in his modest plea,—
 “ Let Favour speak for others, Worth for me.”—
 For who, like him, his various powers could call
 Into so many shapes, and shine in all ?
 Who could so nobly grace the motley list,
 Actor, Inspector, Doctor, Botanist ?²

¹ Murphy was refused admission to the Societies of the Temple and Gray’s Inn, because he had been an actor.

² John Hill—“ Doctor ” by means of a degree purchased from St. Andrews —“ Sir John ” by virtue of a Swedish order—was a quarrelsome quack, who had been an actor, a dramatist, an apothecary, and was at this time a writer of books on botanical subjects, a voluminous contributor to the magazines, and the writer of a daily paper which he called “ The Inspector.”

Knows any one so well—sure no one knows,—
At once to play, prescribe, compound, compose ?¹
Who can—But Woodward came,—Hill slipp'd away,
Melting, like ghosts, before the rising day.²

With that low Cunning, which in fools supplies,
And amply too, the place of being wise,
Which Nature, kind indulgent parent, gave
To qualify the Blockhead for a Knave ;
With that smooth Falshood, whose appearance charms,
And reason of each wholesome doubt disarms,
Which to the lowest depths of guilt descends,
By vilest means pursues the vilest ends,
Wears Friendship's mask for purposes of spite,
Fawns in the day, and Butchers in the night ;
With that malignant Envy, which turns pale,
And sickens, even if a friend prevail,
Which merit and success pursues with hate,
And damns the worth it cannot imitate ;
With the cold Caution of a coward's spleen,
Which fears not guilt, but always seeks a screen,

¹ As Garrick's epigram put it :

“ For physic and farces his equal there scarce is ;
His farces are physic, his physic a farce is.”

² Woodward, the actor, had a quarrel with Hill, who had espoused the cause of a fellow who insulted Woodward in the theatre. “ Hill slipp'd away ” is an allusion to the notorious cowardice of the “ Doctor,” who took, once at least, a public thrashing like a lamb.

Which keeps this maxim ever in her view—
 What's basely done, should be done safely too;
 With that dull, rooted, callous Impudence,
 Which, dead to shame, and ev'ry nicer sense,
 Ne'er blush'd, unless, in spreading Vice's snares,
 She blunder'd on some virtue unawares;
 With all these blessings, which we seldom find
 Lavish'd by Nature on one happy mind,
 A Motley Figure, of the Fribble Tribe,
 Which Heart can scarce conceive, or pen describe,
 Came simp'ring on; to ascertain whose sex
 Twelve, sage, impanell'd Matrons would perplex.
 Nor Male, nor Female; Neither, and yet both;¹
 Of Neuter Gender, tho' of Irish growth;
 A six-foot suckling, mincing in Its gait;
 Affected, peevish, prim, and delicate;
 Fearful It seem'd, tho' of Athletic make,
 Lest brutal breezes should too roughly shake
 Its tender form, and savage motion spread,
 O'er Its pale cheeks, the horrid manly red.

Much did It talk, in Its own pretty phrase,
 Of Genius and of Taste, of Play'rs and Plays;
 Much too of writings, which Itself had wrote,
 Of special merit, tho' of little note;

¹ The eighth edition has a note on this line: "From the *Fribbleriad*, an excellent Poem, publish'd 1761."



David Garrick as Hamlet.

For Fate, in a strange humour, had decreed
 That what It wrote, none but Itself should read ;
 Much too It chatter'd of Dramatic Laws,
 Misjudging Critics, and misplac'd applause,
 Then, with a self-complacent jutting ¹ air,
 It smil'd, It smirk'd, It wriggled to the chair ;
 And, with an aukward briskness not its own,
 Looking around, and perking on the throne,
 Triumphant seem'd, when that strange savage Dame,
 Known but to few, or only known by name,
 Plain Common Sense, appear'd, by Nature there
 Appointed, with plain Truth, to guard the chair.
 The Pageant saw, and, blasted with her frown,
 To Its first state of Nothing melted down.

Nor shall the Muse (for even there the pride
 Of this vain Nothing shall be mortified)
 Nor shall the Muse (should Fate ordain her rimes,
 Fond, pleasing thought ! to live in after-times)
 With such a Trifler's name her pages blot ;
 Known be the Character, the Thing forgot ;
 Let It, to disappoint each future aim,
 Live without Sex, and die without a name ! ²

¹ This adjective may be explained by the following quotation :

“ And all will expect you, when forth you shall come,
 With a smirking round Face and a Jut with your B—m.”

² As has been related in the Introduction, this, with the preceding sixty-one lines (beginning “ With that low cunning ”) first appeared in the 8th edition.

Cold-blooded critics, by enervate sires
 Scarce hammer'd out, when Nature's feeble fires
 Glimmer'd their last; whose sluggish blood, half froze,
 Creeps lab'ring thro' the veins; whose heart ne'er glows
 With fancy-kindled heat:—A servile race,
 Who, in mere want of fault, all merit place;
 Who blind obedience pay to ancient schools,
 Bigots to Greece, and slaves to musty rules;
 With solemn consequence declar'd that none
 Could judge that cause but Sophocles alone.
 Dupes to their fancied excellence, the crowd
 Obsequious to the sacred dictate bow'd.

When, from amidst the throng, a Youth stood forth,
 Unknown his person, not unknown his worth;
 His look bespoke applause; alone he stood,
 Alone he stemm'd the mighty critic flood.
 He talk'd of ancients, as the man became
 Who priz'd our own, but envied not their fame;
 With noble rev'rence spoke of Greece and Rome,
 And scorn'd to tear the laurel from the tomb.

“ But more than just to other countries grown,
 “ Must we turn base apostates to our own?
 “ Where do these words of Greece and Rome excel,
 “ That England may not please the ear as well?
 “ What mighty magic's in the place or air,

“ That all perfection needs must centre there ?
“ In states, let strangers blindly be preferr’d ;
“ In state of letters, Merit should be heard.
“ Genius is of no country, her pure ray
“ Spreads all abroad, as gen’ral as the day ;
“ Foe to restraint, from place to place she flies,
“ And may hereafter e’en in Holland rise.
“ May not (to give a pleasing fancy scope,
“ And chear a patriot heart with patriot hope)
“ May not some great extensive genius raise
“ The name of Britain ’bove Athenian praise ;
“ And, whilst brave thirst of fame his bosom warms,
“ Make England great in Letters as in Arms ?
“ There may—there hath—and Shakespeare’s muse aspires
“ Beyond the reach of Greece ; with native fires
“ Mounting aloft, he wings his daring flight,
“ Whilst Sophocles below stands trembling at his height.

“ Why should we then abroad for judges roam,
“ When abler judges we may find at home ?
“ Happy in tragic and in comic pow’rs,
“ Have we not Shakespeare ?—Is not Jonson ours ?
“ For them, your nat’ral judges, Britons, vote ;
“ They’ll judge like Britons, who like Britons wrote.”

He said, and conquer’d—Sense resum’d her sway,
And disappointed pedants stalk’d away.

Shakespeare and Jonson, with deserv'd applause,
Joint-judges were ordain'd to try the cause.
Mean-time the stranger ev'ry voice employ'd,
To ask or tell his name—Who is it?—Lloyd.¹

Thus, when the aged friends of Job stood mute,
And, tamely prudent, gave up the dispute,
Elihu, with the decent warmth of youth,
Boldly stood forth the advocate of Truth ;
Confuted Falshood, and disabled Pride,
Whilst baffled Age stood snarling at his side.

The day of tryal's fix'd, nor any fear
Lest day of tryal should be put off here.
Causes but seldom for delay can call
In courts where forms are few, fees none at all.

The morning came, nor find I that the Sun,
As he on other great events hath done,
Put on a brighter robe than what he wore
To go his journey in the day before.

Full in the centre of a spacious plain,
On plan entirely new, where nothing vain,
Nothing magnificent appear'd, but Art,
With decent modesty perform'd her part,

¹ For Robert Lloyd see Introduction.

Rose a tribunal : from no other court
 It borrow'd ornament, or sought support :
 No juries here were pack'd to kill or clear,
 No bribes were taken, nor oaths broken here ;
 No gownsmen, partial to a client's cause,
 To their own purpose turn'd the pliant laws.
 Each judge was true and steady to his trust,
 As Mansfield wise, and as old Foster just.

In the first seat, in robe of various dyes,
 A noble wildness flashing from his eyes,
 Sat Shakespeare.—In one hand a wand he bore,
 For mighty wonders fam'd in days of yore ;
 The other held a globe, which to his will
 Obedient turn'd, and own'd the master's skill :
 Things of the noblest kind his genius drew,
 And look'd through Nature at a single view :
 A loose he gave to his unbounded soul,
 And taught new lands to rise, new seas to roll ;
 Call'd into being scenes unknown before,
 And, passing Nature's bounds, was something more.

Next Jonson sat, in ancient learning train'd,
 His rigid Judgment Fancy's flights restrain'd,

¹ Lord Mansfield had been made Lord Chief Justice in 1756 ; and Sir Michael Foster, who was at this time seventy-two years of age, had been raised to the Bench in 1745.

Correctly prun'd each wild luxuriant thought,
Mark'd out her course, nor spar'd a glorious fault.
The book of man he read with nicest art,
And ransack'd all the secrets of the heart;
Exerted Penetration's utmost force,
And trac'd each passion to its proper source;
Then, strongly mark'd, in liveliest colours drew,
And brought each foible forth to publick view.
The Coxcomb felt a lash in ev'ry word,
And fools, hung out, their brother fools deterr'd.
His comic humour kept the world in awe,
And Laughter frightened Folly more than Law.

But, hark!—The trumpet sounds, the crowd gives way
And the procession comes in just array.

Now should I, in some sweet poetic line,
Offer up incense at Apollo's shrine;
Invoke the Muse to quit her calm abode,
And waken Mem'ry with a sleeping ode.¹
For how should mortal man, in mortal verse,
Their titles, merits, or their names rehearse?
But give, kind Dullness, memory and rime,
We'll put off Genius till another time.

First, Order came,—with solemn step, and slow,
In measur'd time his feet were taught to go.

¹ An allusion to Mason's Ode to Memory.

Behind, from time to time, he cast his eye,
 Lest This should quit his place, That step awry.
 Appearances to save his only care ;
 So things seem right, no matter what they are.
 In him his parents saw themselves renew'd,
 Begotten by Sir Critic on Saint Prude.

Then came Drum, Trumpet, Hautboy, Fiddle, Flute ;
 Next Snuffer, Sweeper, Shifter, Soldier, Mute :
 Legions of Angels all in white advance ;
 Furies, all fire, come forward in a dance ;
 Pantomime figures then are brought to view,
 Fools, hand in hand with Fools, go two by two.
 Next came the Treasurer of either house ;
 One with full purse, t'other with not a sous.¹
 Behind, a group of figures awe create,
 Set off with all th' impertinence of state ;
 By lace and feather consecrate to fame,
 Expletive Kings, and Queens without a name.

Here Havard,² all serene, in the same strains,

¹ It suited Churchill's purpose to represent Garrick's treasury as loaded with cash and Rich's as destitute of that commodity; but Rich managed by means of Pantomimes and shows, and by an occasional lucky hit, such as the *Beggar's Opera*, to gain large sums of money.

² William Havard [1710-1778] was apparently somewhat unfairly treated in these lines. Fielding in 1752 wrote of him—"except Mr. Garrick, I do not know that he hath any superior in tragedy at that house;" and, although unfortunate in the possession of a monotonous voice, he appears to have been really an intelligent actor.

Loves, hates, and rages, triumphs, and complains ;
 His easy vacant face proclaim'd a heart
 Which could not feel emotions, nor impart.
 With him came mighty Davies.¹ On my life,
 That Davies hath a very pretty wife :—
 Statesman all over !—In plots famous grown !—
 He mouths a sentence, as curs mouth a bone.

Next Holland² came.—With truly tragic stalk,
 He creeps, he flies.—A Hero should not walk.
 As if with Heav'n he warr'd, his eager eyes
 Planted their batteries against the skies,
 Attitude, Action, Air, Pause, Start, Sigh, Groan,
 He borrow'd, and made use of as his own.
 By fortune thrown on any other stage,
 He might, perhaps, have pleas'd an easy age ;
 But now appears a copy, and no more,
 Of something better we have seen before.
 The actor who would build a solid fame,
 Must Imitation's servile arts disclaim ;

¹ For Thomas Davies [about 1712-1785] see Introduction.

² Charles Holland [1733-1769] was a pupil of Garrick, and these lines seem to describe him with sufficient fairness. The author of a violent attack on Garrick, entitled *Garrick in the Shades*, makes the great actor call Holland "my favourite pupil—whom I instructed in emphasis, tone, and pause—to whom I imparted my own start—my own stare—my own stamp—my own fall—in short, whom I taught to read,"—and Davies describes him as "tumid in utterance, and extravagant in action."



David Garrick as Kiteley.

Act from himself, on his own bottom stand ;
I hate e'en Garrick thus at second-hand.¹ >

Behind came King.²—Bred up in modest lore,
Bashful and young he sought Hibernia's shore ;
Hibernia, fam'd, 'bove ev'ry other grace,
For matchless intrepidity of face.
From Her his Features caught the gen'rous flame,
And bid defiance to all sense of shame.
Tutor'd by Her all rivals to surpass,
'Mongst Drury's sons he comes, and shines in Brass.

¹ In the first edition twelve lines followed here, attacking John Palmer, which Churchill suppressed in the second edition, because they dealt with private character rather than public performance. It will be noticed, too, that in the *Apology* he expresses his regret at these lines. They were the following :—

“That's with a figure form'd to please,
He wants the graceful elegance of ease ;
Awkward and stiff he stands, I know not how,
As always ready to let off a bow.
Truant to love and false to L——a's charms,
He fled ungrateful from her virtuous arms ;
In vain recall'd, renounc'd love's softer claim,
And hither came to seek the bubble Fame.
Ah ! to thy L——a's arms again return ;
With her in mutual flames of rapture burn ;
Unequal to this great attempt, remove,
The itch of honour with the p—x of love.”

² Thomas King [1730-1805] was one of the great comedians. He first played at Drury Lane, but, attracting little notice there, went to Dublin where he remained ten years, returning to London in 1759. In October of that year he made a great success as Brass, in *The Confederacy*.

Lo Yates ¹!—Without the least finesse of art
 He gets applause;—I wish he'd get his part.
 When hot impatience is in full career,
 How vilely “Hark'e! Hark'e!” grates the ear?
 When active Fancy from the brain is sent,
 And stands on tip-toe for some wish'd event,
 I hate those careless blunders which recall
 Suspended sense, and prove it fiction all.²

In characters of low and vulgar mould,
 Where nature's coarsest features we behold,
 Where, destitute of ev'ry decent grace,
 Unmanner'd jests are blurted in your face,
 There Yates with justice strict attention draws,
 Acts truly from himself, and gains applause.
 But when, to please himself or charm his wife,
 He aims at something in politer life,
 When, blindly thwarting Nature's stubborn plan,
 He treads the stage, by way of gentleman,
 The Clown,³ who no one touch of breeding knows,

¹ Richard Yates [1712-1796] is very justly criticised in this passage. Other critics practically repeated Churchill's opinion, as, for instance, the author of the *Theatrical Biography* of 1772, who says that the stage then had no better actor than Yates in his particular line, that his line was *low* comedy, and that almost his only fault was his being imperfect in his lines. Even the *Churchiliad* admits that this and the passage regarding Woodward “are equally just and fair criticisms.”

² In the earlier editions the criticism of Yates ended here. The 7th edition was the first which contained the additional sixteen lines.

³ Seventh edition reads “fop.”

Looks like Tom Errand dress'd in Clincher's cloaths.¹
 Fond of his dress, fond of his person grown,
 Laugh'd at by all, and to himself unknown,
 From side to side he struts, he smiles, he prates,
 And seems to wonder what's become of Yates.

Woodward,² endow'd with various tricks of face,
 Great master in the science of Grimace,
 From Ireland ventures, fav'rite of the Town,
 Lur'd by the pleasing prospect of Renown;
 A speaking Harlequin,³ made up of whim,
 He twists, he twines, he tortures ev'ry limb,
 Plays to the eye with a mere monkey's art,
 And leaves to sense the conquest of the heart.
 We laugh indeed, but on reflection's birth,
 We wonder at ourselves, and curse our mirth.
 His walk of parts he fatally misplac'd,
 And inclination fondly took for taste;
 Hence hath the Town so often seen display'd
 Beau in Burlesque, High Life in Masquerade.

¹ Tom Errand is the Porter who exchanges clothes with Beau Clincher, in Farquhar's *Constant Couple*.

² Henry Woodward [1717-1777] was an admirable comedian, especially, as Churchill states, in parts of extravagant humour. Tom Davies said of him that "for various abilities to delight an audience in comic characters, he had scarce an equal." In the seventh and subsequent editions Churchill lengthened and somewhat modified his criticism of Woodward.

³ Woodward was an admirable Harlequin in Pantomime.

But when bold Wits, not such as patch up plays,
 Cold and correct, in these insipid days,
 Some comic character, strong featur'd, urge
 To probability's extremest verge,
 Where modest judgment her decree suspends,
 And for a time, nor censures, nor commends,
 Where critics can't determine on the spot,
 Whether it is in Nature found or not,
 There Woodward safely shall his pow'rs exert,
 Nor fail of favour where he shews desert.
 Hence he in Bobadil such praises bore,
 Such worthy praises, Kitely scarce had more.¹

By turns transform'd into all kinds of shapes,
 Constant to none, Foote² laughs, cries, struts, and scrapes :
 Now in the centre, now in van or rear,
 The Proteus shifts, Bawd, Parson, Auctioneer.³
 His strokes of humour, and his bursts of sport
 Are all contain'd in this one word, Distort.

¹ Garrick played Kitely at the same time that Woodward played Captain Bobadil, and was highly successful in the character.

² There is no question that Churchill's picture of Samuel Foote [about 1720-1777] is in the truest sense a portrait from the life. As has been related Foote was violently incensed, but had not sufficient courage openly to attack his satirist.

³ Three characters in Foote's farce, *The Minor*, all of which were played by Foote himself. The Bawd is Mrs. Cole; the Parson, Shift; and the Auctioneer, Smirk; in which parts Foote mimicked the notorious Mother Douglas, Whitfield, and Langford the auctioneer, respectively. Tate Wilkinson says that Shift was written in derision of him.

Doth a man stutter, look a-squint, or halt?
 Mimics draw humour out of Nature's fault.
 With personal defects their mirth adorn,
 And hang misfortunes out to public scorn.
 E'en I, whom Nature cast in hideous mould,
 Whom, having made, she trembled to behold,
 Beneath the load of mimicry may groan,
 And find that Nature's errors are my own.

Shadows behind of Foote and Woodward came;
 Wilkinson¹ this, O'Brien² was that name.
 Strange to relate, but wonderfully true,
 That even shadows have their shadows too!
 With not a single comic pow'r endu'd,
 The first a mere mere mimic's mimic stood.
 The last, by Nature form'd to please, who shows,
 In Jonson's Stephen, which way Genius grows,
 Self quite put off, affects, with too much art,

¹ Tate Wilkinson [1739-1803] was a mimic of very remarkable ability, and, notwithstanding Churchill's lines, infinitely superior to Foote both as actor and imitator. As will be seen from my Introduction, Churchill afterwards confessed that his original criticism of the worthy Tate was wrong.

² William O'Brien was apparently a good actor. In *A Dialogue in the Shades*, Mrs. Cibber tells Mrs. Woffington that O'Brien "was a very promising comedian in Woodward's walk, and was much caressed by the nobility, but this apparent good fortune was his ruin; for, having married a young lady of family without her relations' knowledge, he was obliged to transport himself to America, where he is now doing penance for his redemption." The young lady was Lady Susan Strangeways, daughter of the Earl of Ilchester. I have always fancied that Thackeray drew the character of Hagan, the actor who married Lady Maria Esmond, from O'Brien.

To put on Woodward in each mangled part ;
 Adopts his shrug, his wink, his stare ; nay, more,
 His voice, and croaks ; for Woodward croak'd before.
 When a dull copier simple grace neglects,
 And rests his imitation in Defects,
 We readily forgive ; but such vile arts
 Are double guilt in men of real parts.

By Nature formed in her perversest mood,
 With no one requisite of Art endu'd,
 Next Jackson ¹ came.—Observe that settled glare,
 Which better speaks a Puppet than a Play'r ;
 List to that voice—did ever Discord hear
 Sounds so well fitted to her untun'd ear ?
 When, to enforce some very tender part,
 The right hand sleeps by instinct on the heart,
 His soul, of every other thought bereft,
 Is anxious only where to place the left ;
 He sobs and pants to sooth his weeping spouse,
 To sooth his weeping mother, turns and bows.
 Aukward, embarrass'd, stiff, without the skill
 Of moving gracefully, or standing still,

¹ John Jackson did not appear in London till 7 October, 1762, and his name occurs first in the seventh edition of the *Rosciad*. He continued in London about three years, and was afterwards manager in Edinburgh where he published his *History of the Scottish Stage* in 1793. Churchill's criticism of him seems to have been sufficiently just, as all authorities agree that, in spite of his good appearance and possession of some judgment, his harsh voice and provincial accent spoiled him entirely.

One leg, as if suspicious of his brother,
Desirous seems to run away from t'other.

△ Some errors, handed down from age to age,
Plead Custom's force, and still possess the stage.
That's vile—should we a parent's faults adore,
And err, because our fathers err'd before? >
If, inattentive to the author's mind,
Some actors made the jest they could not find,
If by low tricks they marr'd fair Nature's mien,
And blurr'd the graces of the simple scene,
Shall we, if reason rightly is employ'd,
Not see their faults, or seeing not avoid?
When Falstaff stands detected in a lye,
Why, without meaning, rowls Love's ¹ glassy eye?
Why?—There's no cause—at least no cause we know—
It was the Fashion twenty years ago.
Fashion—a word which knaves and fools may use
Their knavery and folly to excuse.
To copy beauties, forfeits all pretence
To fame—to copy faults, is want of sense.

Yet (tho' in some particulars he fails,
Some few particulars, where Mode prevails)
If in these hallow'd times, when sober, sad,

¹ James Love [died 1774] like Jackson appears first in the seventh edition of the *Rosciad*. He did not play in London till 25 Sept. 1762, when he acted Falstaff, which was his best part. He was the son of Dance, the City Surveyor, who erected the Mansion House; and was one of the first actors to assume a stage name.

All Gentlemen are melancholy mad,
 When 'tis not deem'd so great a crime by half
 To violate a Vestal, as to laugh,
 Rude mirth may hope presumptuous to engage
 An Act of Toleration for the stage,
 And courtiers will, like reasonable creatures,
 Suspend vain Fashion, and unscrew their features,
 Old Falstaff, play'd by Love, shall please once more,
 And humour set the audience in a roar.

< Actors I've seen, and of no vulgar name,
 Who, being from one part possess'd of fame,
 Whether they are to laugh, cry, whine, or bawl,
 Still introduce that fav'rite part in all. >
 Here, Love, be cautious—ne'er be thou betray'd
 To call in that wag Falstaff's dang'rous aid;
 Like Goths of old, howe'er he seems a friend,
 He'll seize that throne, you wish him to defend.
 In a peculiar mould by Humour cast,
 For Falstaff fram'd—Himself, the First and Last,—
 He stands aloof from all—maintains his state,
 And scorns, like Scotsmen, to assimilate.
 Vain all disguise—too plain we see the trick,
 Tho' the Knight wears the weeds of Dominic,
 And Boniface, disgrac'd, betrays the smack,
 In Anno Domini, of Falstaff's sack.¹

¹ Dominic in *The Spanish Friar*, and Boniface in *The Beaux Stratagem*, were among the parts which Love played in his first season.



Spranger Barry as Macbeth.

Arms cross'd, brows bent, eyes fix'd, feet marching slow,
A band of malecontents with spleen o'erflow ;
Wrapt in conceit's impenetrable fog,
Which Pride, like Phœbus, draws from ev'ry bog,
They curse the managers, and curse the town,
Whose partial favour keeps such merit down.

But if some man, more hardy than the rest,¹
Should dare attack these gnatlings in their nest ;
At once they rise with impotence of rage,
Whet their small stings, and buzz about the stage.
“ 'Tis breach of privilege !—Shall any dare
“ To arm satyric truth against a play'r ?
“ Prescriptive rights we plead time out of mind ;
“ Actors, unleash'd themselves, may lash mankind.”

What ! shall Opinion then, of nature free
And lib'ral as the vagrant air, agree
To rust in chains like these, impos'd by Things
Which, less than nothing, ape the pride of kings ?
No—though half-poets with half-players join
To curse the freedom of each honest line ;
Though rage and malice dim their faded cheek ;
What the Muse freely thinks, she'll freely speak.

¹ This and the succeeding nineteen lines were inserted in the second edition, as a reproof to the vapouring of the actors and their supporters—“ half poets ” and “ half players.” But, however excellent in itself, this long parenthesis weakens very much the attack on Austin and his fellows, of which it breaks the continuity.

With just disdain of ev'ry paltry sneer,
 Stranger alike to flattery and fear,
 In purpose fix'd, and to herself a rule,
 Public Contempt shall wait the Public Fool.

Austin ¹ would always glisten in French silks,
 Ackman would Norris be, and Packer Wilks.
 For who, like Ackman, can with humour please ;
 Who can, like Packer, charm with sprightly ease ?
 Higher than all the rest, see Bransby ² strut :
 A mighty Gulliver in Lilliput !
 Ludicrous nature ! which at once could shew
 A man so very High, so very Low.

If I forget thee, Blakes,³ or if I say
 Aught hurtful, may I never see thee play.
 Let critics, with a supercilious air,
 Decry thy various merit, and declare

¹ Joseph Austin [died 1821], was a sort of assistant prompter and general factotum to Garrick. Ackman and Packer played a great variety of small parts. All three were actors of the lowest rank.

Norris was the famous low comedian of a previous generation, while Wilks was its light comedian, its *jeune premier*, its fine gentleman.

² Of Bransby there is little record, save that he was very tall. The *Dramatic Censor* of 1770 several times alludes to his stature, saying in one place that his Kent (*King Lear*), resembled a "reduced life-guard-man" rather than a disguised peer.

³ Blakes [died 1763], was an admirable actor of Frenchmen. Genest records that in 1743-44 the farce of the *Anatomist* was played seventeen times, owing to the excellence of Blakes as Mons. le Medecin.

Frenchman is still at top ;—but scorn that rage
Which, in attacking thee, attacks the age. ^s
French follies, universally embrac'd,
At once provoke our mirth, and form our taste.

Long, from a nation ever hardly us'd,
At random censur'd, wantonly abus'd,
Have Britons drawn their sport, with partial view
Form'd gen'ral notions from the rascal few ;
Condemn'd a people, as for vices known,
Which, from their country banish'd, seek our own.
At length, howe'er, the slavish chain is broke,
And Sense, awaken'd, scorns her ancient yoke :
Taught by 'Thee, Moody,¹ we learn to raise
Mirth from their foibles ; from their virtues, praise.

Next ² came the legion, which our Summer Bayes,³
From Alleys, here and there, contriv'd to raise,
Flush'd with vast hopes, and certain to succeed,
With Wits who cannot write, and scarce can read.
Vet'rans no more support the rotten cause,

¹ John Moody [died 1812], made his first appearance in London in 1759. The character to which Churchill specially refers was no doubt Sir Callaghan O'Brallaghan, the disinterested Irishman in Macklin's *Love à la Mode* (1759), of which Moody was the original representative.

² This and the succeeding seventy-five lines were not in the earlier editions of the *Rosciad*.

³ Foote, who, with Arthur Murphy, leased Drury Lane in 1761 for the summer season, when it would in ordinary course have been closed.

No more from Elliot's worth they reap applause,
 Each on himself determines to rely,
 Be Yates disbanded, and let Elliot fly.¹
 Never did play'rs so well an Author fit,
 To Nature dead, and foes declar'd to Wit.
 So loud each tongue, so empty was each head,
 So much they talk'd, so very little said,
 So wond'rous dull, and yet so won'drous vain,
 At once so willing, and unfit to reign,
 That Reason swore, nor would the oath recall,
 Their mighty Master's soul inform'd them all.

As one with various disappointments sad,
 Whom Dullness only kept from being mad,
 Apart from all the rest great Murphy² came—
 Common to fools and wits, the rage of fame.
 What tho' the sons of Nonsense hail him Sire,
 Auditor, Author, Manager, and 'Squire,
 His restless soul's ambition stops not there,
 To make his triumphs perfect, dubb him Play'r.

In person tall, a figure form'd to please,
 If Symmetry could charm, depriv'd of ease;
 When motionless he stands, we all approve;
 < What pity 'tis the thing was made to move >

¹ Yates and his wife and Miss Elliot were members of Foote and Murphy's company in 1761.

² For Arthur Murphy see Introduction.

His voice, in one dull, deep, unvaried sound,
 Seems to break forth from caverns under ground.
 From hollow chest the low sepulchral note
 Unwilling heaves, and struggles in his throat.

Could authors butcher'd give an actor grace,
 All must to him resign the foremost place.
 When he attempts, in some one fav'rite part,
 To ape the feelings of a manly heart,
 His honest features the disguise defy,
 And his face loudly gives his tongue the lye.

Still in extremes, he knows no happy mean,
 Or raving mad, or stupidly serene,
 In cold wrought scenes the lifeless actor flags,
 In passion, tears the passion into rags.
 Can none remember?—Yes—I know all must—¹
 When in the Moor he ground his teeth to dust,
 When o'er the stage he Folly's standard bore,
 Whilst Common-Sense stood trembling at the door.

How few are found with real talents bless'd,
 Fewer with Nature's gifts contented rest.
 Man from his sphere eccentric starts astray;
 All hunt for fame; but most mistake the way.

¹ "Can none remember? Yes, I know all must!" is Alexander's famous line in Nat. Lee's *Alexander the Great, or The Rival Queens*.

Bred at St. Omer's to the Shuffling trade,
 The hopeful youth a Jesuit might have made,
 With various readings stor'd his empty skull,
 Learn'd without sense, and venerably dull ;
 Or, at some Banker's desk, like many more,
 Content to tell, that two and two make four,¹
 His name had stood in City Annals fair,
 And Prudent Dullness mark'd him for a Mayor.

What then could tempt thee, in a critic age,
 Such blooming hopes to forfeit on a stage ?
 Could it be worth thy wond'rous waste of pains
 To publish to the world thy lack of brains ?
 Or might not reason e'en to thee have shewn
 Thy greatest praise had been to live unknown ?
 Yet let not vanity, like thine, despair :
 Fortune makes Folly her peculiar care.

A vacant throne high-plac'd in Smithfield view,
 To sacred Dullness and her first-born due,
 Thither with haste in happy hour repair,
 Thy birth-right claim, nor fear a rival there.
 Shuter himself shall own thy juster claim,
 And venal Ledgers ² puff their Murphy's name,

¹ Murphy actually had the training here described. He was at St. Omer's from 1740 to 1746, and, some two years later, was employed in the banking-house of Ironside and Belchier in Lombard Street.

² *The Publick Ledger*, a newspaper strongly in Murphy's interest.

Whilst Vaughan ¹ or Dapper, call him which you will,
Shall blow the trumpet, and give out the bill.

There rule secure from critics and from sense,
Nor once shall Genius rise to give offence ;
Eternal peace shall bless the happy shore,
And little factions break thy rest no more.

From Covent-Garden crowds promiscuous go,
Whom the Muse knows not, nor desires to know.
Vet'rans they seem'd, but knew of arms no more
Than if, till that time, arms they never bore :
Like Westminster militia, train'd to fight,
They scarcely knew the left hand from the right,
Asham'd among such troops to shew the head,
Their Chiefs were scatter'd, and their Heroes fled.²

Sparks ³ at his glass sat comfortably down
To sep'rate frown from smile, and smile from frown ;

¹ Thomas Vaughan, clerk to the Commission of the Peace for Westminster, wrote some plays and was a great dabbler in theatrical affairs. His nickname of "Dapper" was given him by Colman in the course of a literary quarrel ; and Sheridan is said to have intended Dangle in *The Critic* to be a portrait of Vaughan.

² Alluding, no doubt, to the retirement of Quin, the recent death of Ryan, and the defection of Barry.

³ Luke Sparks [died about 1769], seems to have been an actor of some merit, but very mechanical in method. The *Dramatic Censor* (1770) says that in Henry IV. he was "stiffly mechanical" in deportment, and "irksomely laborious" in declamation.

Smith,¹ the genteel, the airy, and the smart,
 Smith was just gone to school to say his part;
 Ross² (a misfortune which we often meet)
 Was fast asleep at dear Statira's feet;
 Statira, with her hero to agree,
 Stood on her feet as fast asleep as he;³
 Macklin, who largely deals in half-form'd sounds,
 Who wantonly transgresses Nature's bounds,⁴
 Whose Acting's hard, affected, and constrain'd,
 Whose features, as each other they disdain'd,

¹ William Smith [1730-1819] was generally known as "Gentleman Smith," and was an excellent actor. Churchill's allusion to his going to school to say his part no doubt points at his fondness for being coached by Garrick. Boaden says, "he would often beg from Mr. Garrick an hour's attention to his rehearsals;" and Dibdin talks of his "correct study of the method and manner of Garrick."

² David Ross [1728-1790], is quite justly described in these lines. He had undoubted ability, but was lazy and indolent to a degree. He married Fanny Murray, a notorious "purchaseable beauty," as John Taylor puts it Murphy, in an angry letter to Garrick, alludes to Ross as "Fanny Murray's Cull."

³ The lady who played Statira to Ross's Alexander was Mrs. Ward. They had acted the parts the previous season (1759-60) for the Benefit of Ross; and in the *Publick Advertiser* of 18th March, 1761, a few days after the *Rosciad* was published, I find them announced to play them for the lady's Benefit. Regarding Mrs. Ward's lack of feeling, Mrs. Bellamy, who was, however, her bitter rival, declares that Garrick took a great distaste to her on that account. "Of this she gave him one night the strongest proof, by being employed in adjusting her glove-knot, which happened to come untied during one of the most pathetic and interesting scenes in the *Fair Penitent*" (Bellamy's Life, ii. 97). It has been stated that Mrs. Palmer, Mrs. Pritchard's daughter, was the Statira here referred to; but, as a matter of fact, she did not play the part until some years after the *Rosciad* was written.

⁴ Charles Macklin [1699-1797], the famous actor of Shylock, is severely but not unjustly treated by Churchill. His name was not mentioned in the first



Mrs Clive as a Shepherdess.

At variance set, inflexible and coarse,
 Ne'er know the workings of united force,
 Ne'er kindly soften to each other's aid,
 Nor shew the mingled pow'rs of light and shade.
 No longer for a thankless stage concern'd,
 To worthier thoughts his mighty Genius turn'd,
 Harangu'd, gave Lectures, made each simple elf
 Almost as good a speaker as himself;
 Whilst the whole town, mad with mistaken zeal,
 An aukward rage for Elocution feel;
 Dull Cits and grave Divines his praise proclaim,
 And join with Sheridan's their Macklin's name;¹
 Shuter, who never car'd a single pin
 Whether he left out nonsense, or put in,
 Who aim'd at wit, tho', levell'd in the dark,
 The random arrow seldom hit the mark,²

edition of the *Rosciad*, and in the second edition there were only four lines devoted to him :—

“ M—kl—n, who largely deals in half-form'd sounds,
 Who wantonly transgresses Nature's bounds,
 Eager to touch up some new comic scene,
 Lay happily conceal'd behind a screen.”

This is an allusion, I can only suppose, to Macklin's play, the *Married Libertine*, in which Belville, acted by Macklin, conceals himself behind a screen.

¹ An allusion to Macklin's foolish project of The British Inquisition, where he lectured, gave readings, and taught elocution.

² In the first edition two lines which followed here completed Shuter's character : they disappeared in the second edition.

“ Not thinking they so soon would bring the cause on,
 Studied the tale of W—f—d, or of D—w—n.”

The allusion is to Shuter's adherence to Whitfield, and to his amour with Nancy Dawson.

At Islington, all by the placid stream
 Where city swains in lap of Dullness dream,
 Where, quiet as her strains their strains do flow,
 That all the patron by the bards may know;
 Secret as night, with Rolt's ¹ experienc'd aid,
 The plan of future operations laid,
 Projected schemes the summer months to chear,
 And spin out happy Folly through the year.²

But think not, though these dastard-chiefs are fled,
 That Covent-Garden troops shall want a head:
 Harlequin comes their chief!—see from afar,
 The hero seated in fantastic car!
 Wedded to novelty, his only arms
 Are wooden swords, wands, talismans, and charms;
 On one side Folly sits, by some call'd Fun,
 And on the other, his arch-patron, Lun.³
 Behind, for liberty a-thirst in vain,
 Sense, helpless captive, drags the galling chain.
 Six rude mis-shapen beasts the chariot draw,

¹ Richard Rolt, an unfortunate literary hack, who wrote songs for the theatres, Vauxhall, Sadler's Wells, etc. He occasionally took a share in small theatrical speculations, to one of which Churchill seems to refer here.

² Edward Shuter [died 1776] was a most luxuriantly comic actor, full of mad humour, and with little restraint. In his later years he became an adherent of Whitfield; and, as Wilkinson states, between the bottle and the tabernacle, his head was in a muddle.

³ The stage name of John Rich [1691-1761], manager of Covent Garden, and the best harlequin of his time.

Whom Reason loaths, and Nature never saw,
 Monsters, with tails of ice, and heads of fire ;
 Gorgons, and Hydras, and Chymæras dire.¹
 Each was bestrode by full as monstrous wight,
 Giant, Dwarf, Genius, Elf, Hermaphrodite.
 The Town, as usual, met him in full cry ;
 The Town, as usual, knew no reason why.
 But Fashion so directs, and Moderns raise
 On Fashion's mould'ring base their transient praise.

Next, to the field a band of females draw
 Their force ; for Britain owns no Salique Law :
 Just to their worth, we female rights admit,
 Nor bar their claim to Empire or to Wit.

First, giggling, plotting Chamber-maids arrive,
 Hoydens and Romps, led on by Gen'ral Clive.
 In spite of outward blemishes, she shone
 For Humour fam'd, and Humour all her own.
 Easy as if at Home the stage she trod,
 Nor sought the Critic's praise, nor fear'd his rod.
 Original in spirit and in ease,
 She pleas'd by hiding all attempts to please.
 No comic actress ever yet could raise,
 On Humour's base, more merit or more praise.²

¹ *Paradise Lost*, Book ii. line 628.

² An admirable panegyric of that incomparable comedian, Kitty Clive. She left the stage in April, 1769, and lived in retirement at Twickenham, with Horace Walpole for neighbour, until her death, which occurred in 1785.

With all the native vigour of sixteen,
 Among the merry troop conspicuous seen,
 See lively Pope advance in jig and trip,
 Corinna, Cherry, Honeycomb, and Snip.
 Not without Art, but yet to Nature true,
 She charms the Town with Humour just, yet new,
 Chear'd by her promise, we the less deplore
 The fatal time when Clive shall be no more.¹

Lo! Vincent comes—with simple grace array'd,
 She laughs at paltry arts, and scorns parade.
 Nature through her is by reflection shewn,
 Whilst Gay once more knows Polly for his own.²

Talk not to me of diffidence and fear—
 I see it all, but must forgive it here.
 Defects like these which modest terrors cause,
 From Impudence itself extort applause.
 Candour and Reason still take Virtue's part;
 We love e'en foibles in so good an heart.

¹ Miss Pope [died 1812] had been on the stage for little more than a year when this eulogy of her powers was written. Churchill's praise was richly deserved, and his prophecy that she would supply Mrs. Clive's place was duly fulfilled. The parts he selects for special mention are in *The Confederacy*, *Beaux' Stratagem*, *Polly Honeycombe*, and *Harlequin's Invasion* respectively.

² This is one of the few cases in which Churchill gives undue praise. John Taylor, who was a great friend of the lady, admits that the poet is "certainly too partial to her talents," and says that her sweetness of disposition probably earned her the eulogium. She made her *début* at Drury Lane on 23 Sept. 1760, playing the part for which Churchill praises her,—Polly in the *Beggar's Opera*. The lines on her and those on Dr. Arne were not in the earlier editions of the *Rosciad*.

Let Tommy Arne,¹ with usual pomp of stile,
 Whose chief, whose only merit's to compile,
 Who, meanly pilf'ring here and there a bit,
 Deals music out as Murphy deals out Wit,
 Publish proposals, laws for taste prescribe,
 And chant the praise of an Italian tribe;
 Let him reverse kind Nature's first decrees,
 And teach e'en Brent² a method not to please;
 But never shall a truly British Age,
 Bear a vile race of eunuchs on the stage.
 The boasted work's called National in vain,
 If one Italian voice pollutes the strain.
 Where tyrants rule, and slaves with joy obey,
 Let slavish minstrels pour th' enervate lay;
 To Britons far more noble pleasures spring,
 In native notes whilst Beard³ and Vincent sing.

Might Figure give a title unto Fame,
 What rival should with Yates⁴ dispute her claim?

¹ Dr. Thomas Augustine Arne [1710-1778] was, of course, a much better musician than Churchill allows. The attack on him for his Italian proclivities has special reference, I do not doubt, to his opera of *Artaxerxes*, which was produced in Feb. 1762. It was written after the Italian manner, and was sung partly by Italian and partly by English artists.

² Miss Brent [died 1802] was a pupil of Dr. Arne, and had a voice of great power and beauty. She made an astonishing success as Polly Peachum, which she first played on 10 October, 1759.

³ John Beard [1716-1791] was an admirable singer. He married the daughter of John Rich, and thus became owner of a share in Covent Garden Theatre, of which he was manager after Rich's death.

⁴ Anna Maria Yates [died 1787] was an actress of the highest rank, not

But Justice may not partial trophies raise,
Nor sink the Actress in the Woman's praise.
Still hand in hand her words and actions go,
And the heart feels more than the features show :
For, through the regions of that beauteous face,
We no variety of passions trace ;
Dead to the soft emotions of the heart,
No kindred softness can those eyes impart ;
The brow, still fix'd in Sorrow's sullen frame,
Void of distinction, marks all parts the same.

What's a fine person, or a beauteous face,
Unless Deportment gives them decent grace ?
Bless'd with all other requisites to please,
Some want the striking elegance of Ease ;
The curious eye their aukward movement tires ;
They seem like puppets led about by wires.
Others, like statues, in one posture still,
Give great ideas of the workman's skill ;
Wond'ring, his art we praise the more we view,
And only grieve he gave not motion too.
Weak of themselves are what we beauties call,
It is the Manner which gives strength to all.

unworthy to be compared with Mrs. Siddons herself. In this passage Churchill, I fancy, does scant justice to her really great powers. Davies praised her "just elocution, noble manner, warm passion, and majestic deportment ;" and Wilkinson (a supremely excellent judge) declared her Margaret of Anjou as perfect as Mrs. Siddons's Zara.

This teaches ev'ry beauty to unite,
 And brings them forward in the noblest light.
 Happy in this, behold, amidst the throng,
 With transient gleam of grace, Hart ¹ sweeps along.

If all the wonders of external grace,
 A person finely turn'd, a mould of face,
 Where, Union rare, Expression's lively force
 With Beauty's softest magic holds discourse,
 Attract the eye ; if feelings, void of art,
 Rouze the quick passions, and enflame the heart ;
 If music, sweetly breathing from the tongue,
 Captives the ear, Bride ² must not pass unsung.

When Fear, which rank ill-nature terms Conceit,
 By time and custom conquer'd, shall retreat ;
 When Judgment, tutor'd by experience sage,
 Shall shoot abroad, and gather strength from age ;
 When Heav'n in mercy shall the stage release
 From the dull slumbers of a still-life piece ;

¹ Mrs. Hart was a woman of elegant figure and little ability, who never made any reputation as an actress. The *Theatrical Biography* (1772) describes her as "a lady who Churchill particularly compliments in the *Rosciad* ; though from her present face and figure one would be led to imagine such a compliment was but a *poetical licence*." Mrs. Hart married Reddish, the actor. The sixteen lines relating to her first appeared in the second edition of the *Rosciad*.

² This and the succeeding paragraph first appeared in the seventh edition. They are absurdly laudatory, if we accept as a test the position attained by the actress praised. She was originally a figure-dancer, and made her first appearance as an actress on 18 October, 1760.

When some stale flow'r,¹ disgraceful to the walk,
 Which long hath hung, tho' wither'd on the stalk,
 Shall kindly drop, then Bride shall make her way,
 And Merit find a passage to the day;
 Brought into action she at once shall raise
 Her own renown, and justify our praise.

Form'd for the tragic scene, to grace the stage,
 With rival excellence of Love and Rage,
 Mistress of each soft art, with matchless skill
 To turn and wind the passions as she will;
 To melt the heart with sympathetic woe,
 Awake the sigh, and teach the tear to flow;
 To put on Frenzy's wild distracted glare,
 And freeze the soul with horror and despair;
 With just desert enroll'd in endless fame,
 Conscious of worth superior, Cibber² came.

¹ It has been generally assumed that Mrs. Palmer, daughter of Mrs. Pritchard, was the "stale flower" here attacked; and, although it seems strange to write of her as having hung long on the stalk, for she had been only seven years an actress, I cannot suggest any member of the Drury Lane Company to whom the criticism would better apply.

² Susanna Maria Cibber [about 1712-1766] was sister of "Tommy Arne," and was so unlucky as to marry that disreputable rascal, Theo. Cibber. The subsequent proceedings may be learned from various "curious and disgusting" tracts, such as *The Tryal of a Cause for Criminal Conversation between Theophilus Cibber and William Sloper*; *Cuckoldom's Glory*; *The Comforts of Matrimony*, etc. Mrs. Cibber's powers as an actress are very justly described by Churchill. Tate Wilkinson used to say, that while he could mimic Garrick, Quin, Mrs. Bellamy, and others, in such a manner as to give a strong idea of their powers, yet Mrs. Cibber's excellence was of that superior kind that he could only retain her in his mind's eye.



M^{rs} Pritchard.

When poor Alicia's ¹ madd'ning brains are rack'd,
 And strongly imag'd griefs her mind distract;
 Struck with her grief, I catch the madness too!
 My brain turns round, the headless trunk I view!
 The roof cracks, shakes and falls!—New horrors rise,
 And Reason buried in the ruin lies.

Nobly disdainful of each slavish art,
 She makes her first attack upon the heart:
 Pleas'd with the summons, it receives her laws,
 And all is silence, sympathy, applause.

But when, by fond Ambition drawn aside,
 Giddy with praise, and puff'd with female pride,
 She quits the tragic scene, and, in pretence
 To comic merit,² breaks down Nature's fence;
 I scarcely can believe my ears or eyes,
 Or find out Cibber through the dark disguise.

Pritchard,³ by Nature for the stage design'd,
 In person graceful, and in sense refin'd;

¹ Murphy and Churchill on this point were at one. The former said that in the mad scene of Alicia (*Jane Shore*) the expression of Mrs. Cibber's countenance, and the irresistible magic of her voice, thrilled to the very soul of the whole audience.

² In sentimental comedy Mrs. Cibber seems to have been very charming. Churchill's censure no doubt applied to her attempts at broad comedy, or at the extravagances of the fine ladies.

³ This splendid eulogium of Hannah Pritchard [1711-1768] is so complete and so just that it needs neither amplification nor corroboration. On the stage she

Her Art as much as Nature's friend became,
 Her voice as free from blemish as her fame.
 Who knows so well in majesty to please,
 Attemper'd with the graceful charms of ease ?

When Congreve's favour'd pantomime¹ to grace,
 She comes a captive queen of Moorish race ;
 When Love, Hate, Jealousy, Despair and Rage,
 With wildest tumults in her breast engage ;
 Still equal to herself is Zara seen ;
 Her passions are the passions of a Queen.

When she to murder whets the tim'rous Thane,
 I feel ambition rush through ev'ry vein ;
 Persuasion hangs upon her daring tongue,
 My heart grows flint, and ev'ry nerve's new strung.²

In Comedy—"Nay, there," cries Critic, "hold.
 "Pritchard's for Comedy too fat and old.
 "Who can, with patience, bear the gray coquette,
 "Or force a laugh with over-grown Julett?³

seems to have been a perfect actress, and it is difficult to reconcile the unquestioned record of her excellencies with Dr. Johnson's famous utterance: "Pritchard," said he, "in common life, was a vulgar idiot: she would talk of her *gownd*; but, when she appeared upon the stage, seemed to be inspired by gentility and understanding."

¹ *The Mourning Bride*, in which Mrs. Pritchard played Zara.

² Lady Macbeth must have been a favourite character, for she chose to take her farewell in that part—24 April, 1768.

³ Juletta, a pert waiting-maid in an alteration of Fletcher's *Pilgrim*, was first played by Mrs. Pritchard on 30 November, 1738.

“ Her Speech, Look, Action, Humour, all are just ;
“ But then, her age and figure give disgust.”

Are Foibles then, and Graces of the mind,
In real life, to size or age confin'd ?
Do spirits flow, and is good-breeding plac'd
In any set circumference of waist ?
As we grow old, doth affectation cease,
Or gives not age new vigour to caprice ?
If in originals these things appear,
Why should we bar them in the copy here ?
The nice punctilio-mongers of this age,
The grand minute reformers of the stage,
Slaves to propriety of ev'ry kind,
Some standard-measure for each part should find,
Which when the best of Actors shall exceed,
Let it devolve to one of smaller breed.
All actors too upon the back should bear
Certificate of birth ;—time, when ;—place, where.
For how can critics rightly fix their worth,
Unless they know the minute of their birth ?
An audience too, deceiv'd, may find too late
That they have clapp'd an actor out of date.

Figure, I own, at first may give offence,
And harshly strike the eye's too curious sense :
But when perfections of the mind break forth,

Humour's chaste sallies, Judgment's solid worth ;
 When the pure genuine flame, by Nature taught,
 Springs into Sense, and ev'ry action's Thought ;
 Before such merit all objections fly ;
 Pritchard's genteel, and Garrick's six feet high.

Oft have I, Pritchard, seen thy wond'rous skill,
 Confess'd thee great, but find thee greater still.
 That worth, which shone in scatter'd rays before,
 Collected now, breaks forth with double pow'r.
 The Jealous Wife !¹ On that thy trophies raise,
 Inferior only to the Author's praise.

From Dublin, fam'd in legends of Romance
 For mighty magic of enchanted lance,
 With which her heroes arm'd victorious prove,
 And like a flood rush o'er the land of Love,
 Mossop and Barry came.—Names ne'er design'd
 By fate in the same sentence to be join'd.
 Rais'd by the breath of popular acclaim,
 They mounted to the pinnacle of Fame ;
 There the weak brain, made giddy with the height,
 Spurr'd on the rival chiefs to mortal fight.
 Thus sportive boys, around some bason's brim,
 Behold the pipe-drawn bladders circling swim :

¹ *The Jealous Wife*, by George Colman the Elder, was produced at Drury Lane on 12 Feb. 1761, Garrick playing Oakley, and Mrs. Pritchard Mrs. Oakley, the Jealous Wife.

But if from lungs more potent, there arise
 Two bubbles of a more than common size,
 Eager for honour they for fight prepare,
 Bubble meets bubble, and both sink to air.

Mossop,¹ attach'd to military plan,
 Still kept his eye fix'd on his right-hand man.
 Whilst the mouth measures words with seeming skill,
 The right hand labours, and the left lies still ;
 For he resolved on scripture-grounds to go,
 What the right doth, the left-hand shall not know.
 With studied 'impropriety of speech,
 He soars beyond the hackney critic's reach ;
 To epithets allots emphatic state,
 Whilst principals, ungrac'd, like lacquies wait ;
 In ways first trodden by himself excels,
 And stands alone in indeclinables ;
 Conjunction, preposition, adverb join
 To stamp new vigour on the nervous line :
 In monosyllables his thunders roll,
 HE, SHE, IT, AND, WE, YE, THEY, fright the soul.

In person taller than the common size,
 Behold where Barry ² draws admiring eyes !

¹ This criticism of poor Henry Mossop [1729-1773] is very disingenuous, for it hits off with biting humour his undoubted defects, but says nothing of his equally unquestionable merits.

² For Spranger Barry [1719-1777] see Introduction.

When lab'ring passions, in his bosom pent,
Convulsive rage, and struggling heave for vent ;
Spectators, with imagin'd terrors warm,
Anxious expect the bursting of the storm :
But, all unfit in such a pile to dwell,
His voice comes forth, like Echo from her cell ;
To swell the tempest needful aid denies,
And all a-down the stage in feeble murmurs dies.

What man, like Barry, with such pains, can err
In elocution, action, character ?
What man could give, if Barry was not here,
Such well-applauded tenderness to Lear ?
Who else can speak so very, very fine,
That Sense may kindly end with ev'ry line?

Some dozen lines before the Ghost is there,
Behold him for the solemn scene prepare.
See how he frames his eyes, poises each limb,
Puts the whole body into proper trim.—
From whence we learn, with no great stretch of art,
Five lines hence comes a ghost, and, Ha ! a start.

When he appears most perfect, still we find
Something which jars upon, and hurts the mind,
Whatever lights upon a part are thrown,
We see too plainly they are not his own.

No flame from Nature ever yet he caught ;
 Nor knew a feeling which he was not taught ;
 He rais'd his trophies on the base of art,
 And conn'd his passions, as he conn'd his part.

Quin,¹ from afar, lur'd by the scent of fame,
 A Stage Leviathan, put in his claim.
 Pupil of Betterton and Booth. Alone,
 Sullen he walk'd, and deem'd the chair his own.
 For how should moderns, mushrooms of the day,
 Who ne'er those masters knew, know how to play ?
 Grey-bearded vet'rans, who, with partial tongue,
 Extol the times when they themselves were young ;
 Who, having lost all relish for the stage,
 See not their own defects, but lash the age,
 Receiv'd, with joyful murmurs of applause,
 Their darling chief, and lin'd² his fav'rite cause.

Far be it from the candid Muse to tread
 Insulting o'er the ashes of the dead,
 But, just to living merit, she maintains,
 And dares the test, whilst Garrick's Genius reigns
 Ancients, in vain, endeavour to excel,
 Happily prais'd, if they could act as well.

¹ For James Quin [1693-1766] see Introduction.

² Strengthened, or supported.

“And hath sent for you
 To line his enterprise.”—*Henry IV.*, Part 1.

But, though prescription's force we disallow,
Nor to antiquity submissive bow ;
Though we deny imaginary grace,
Founded on accidents of time and place ;
Yet real worth of ev'ry growth shall bear
Due praise, nor must we, Quin, forget thee there.

His words bore sterling weight, nervous and strong
In manly tides of sense they roll'd along.
Happy in art, he chiefly had pretence
To keep up Numbers, yet not forfeit Sense.
No actor ever greater heights could reach
In all the labour'd artifice of speech.

Speech ! Is that all ?—And shall an actor found
An universal fame on partial ground ?
Parrots themselves speak properly by rote,
And, in six months, my dog shall howl by note.
I laugh at those, who, when the stage they tread,
Neglect the heart, to compliment the head ;
With strict propriety their care's confin'd
To weigh out words, while Passion halts behind.
To Syllable-dissectors they appeal,
Allow them accent, cadence,—Fools may feel ;
But, Spite of all the criticising elves,
Those who would make us feel, must feel themselves.>

His eyes, in gloomy socket taught to roll,
Proclaim'd the sullen habit of his soul.



James Quin

Heavy and phlegmatic he trod the stage,
 Too proud for Tenderness, too dull for Rage.
 When Hector's lovely widow shines in Tears,
 Or Rowe's gay Rake dependant Virtue jeers,
 With the same cast of features he is seen
 To chide the Libertine, and court the Queen.
 From the tame scene, which without passion flows,
 With just desert his reputation rose ;
 Nor less he pleas'd, when, on some surly plan,
 He was, at once, the Actor and the Man.

In Brute¹ he shone unequall'd : all agree
 Garrick's not half so great a brute as he.
 When Cato's labour'd scenes are brought to view ;
 With equal praise the Actor labour'd too,
 For still you'll find, trace passions to their root,
 Small diff'rence 'twixt the Stoic and the Brute.
 In fancied scenes, as in life's real plan,
 He could not, for a moment, sink the Man.
 In whate'er cast his character was laid,
 Self still, like oil, upon the surface play'd.
 Nature, in spite of all his skill, crept in :
 Horatio, Dorax,² Falstaff,—still was Quin.

Next follows Sheridan.³—A doubtful name,
 As yet unsettled in the rank of Fame.

¹ Sir John Brute, in *The Provoked Wife*.

² Horatio, in *Fair Penitent* ; Dorax, in *Don Sebastian*.

³ Thomas Sheridan [1721-1788], the father of R. B. Sheridan, was no

This, fondly lavish in his praises grown,
 Gives him all merit : That allows him none.
 Between them both, we'll steer the middle course,
 Nor, loving Praise, rob Judgment of her force.

Just his conceptions, natural and great :
 His feelings strong, his words enforc'd with weight.
 Was speech-fam'd Quin himself to hear him speak,
 Envy would drive the colour from his cheek :
 But step-dame Nature, niggard of her grace,
 Deny'd the social pow'rs of voice and face.
 Fix'd in one frame of features, glare of eye,
 Passions, like Chaos, in confusion lie :
 In vain the wonders of his skill are try'd
 To form Distinction Nature hath deny'd.
 His voice no touch of harmony admits,
 Irregularly deep, and shrill by fits :
 The two extremes appear like man and wife,
 Coupled together for the sake of strife.

His action's always strong, but sometimes such
 That Candour must declare he acts too much.
 Why must Impatience fall three paces back ?
 Why paces three return to the attack ?
 Why is the right leg too forbid to stir,

novice in 1761, and Churchill's apparent difficulty in determining his position no doubt arose from Sheridan's having played comparatively little in London, Dublin being his head-quarters.

Unless in motion semicircular ?
 Why must the Hero with the Nailor vie,
 And hurl the close-clench'd fist at nose or eye ?
 In Royal John, with Philip angry grown,
 I thought he would have knock'd poor Davies down.
 Inhuman tyrant ! was it not a shame,
 To fright a king so harmless and so tame ?
 But, spite of all defects, his glories rise ;
 And Art, by Judgment form'd, with Nature vies ;
 Behold him sound the depths of Hubert's soul,
 Whilst in his own contending passions roll ;
 View the whole scene, with critic judgment scan,
 And then deny him merit if you can,¹
 Where he falls short, 'tis Nature's fault alone ;
 Where he succeeds, the Merit's all his own.

Last Garrick came.—Behind him throng a train
 Of snarling critics, ignorant as vain.

One finds out,—“ He's of stature somewhat low,—
 “ Your Hero always should be tall you know.—
 “ True nat'ral greatness all consists in height.”
 Produce your voucher, Critic.—“ Sergeant Kite.”²

¹ It is very interesting to know, on Michael Kelly's authority, that R. B. Sheridan held his father's King John in the highest estimation. “ Without partiality,” he said, “ his scene with Hubert was a master-piece of the art, and no actor could ever reach its excellence.”

² “ He that has the good fortune to be born six foot high, was born to be a great man.”—Sergeant Kite, in Farquhar's *Recruiting Officer*.

Another can't forgive the paltry arts,
 By which he makes his way to shallow hearts ;
 Mere pieces of finesse, traps for applause.—
 “Avaunt, unnat'ral Start, affected Pause.”

For me, by Nature form'd to judge with phlegm,
 I can't acquit by wholesale, nor condemn.
 The best things carried to excess are wrong :
 The start may be too frequent, pause too long ;
 But, only us'd in proper time and place,
 Severest judgment must allow them Grace.

If Bunglers, form'd on Imitation's plan,
 Just in the way that Monkeys mimic Man,
 Their copied scene with mangled arts disgrace,
 And pause and start with the same vacant face ;
 We join the critic laugh ; those tricks we scorn,
 Which spoil the scenes they mean them to adorn.
 But when, from Nature's pure and genuine source,
 These strokes of Acting flow with gen'rous force,
 When in the features all the soul's portray'd,
 And passions, such as Garrick's, are display'd,
 To me they seem from quickest feelings caught :
 Each start is Nature ; and each pause is Thought.

When Reason yields to Passion's wild alarms,
 And the whole state of Man is up in arms ;

What, but a Critic, could condemn the Play'r,
For pausing here, when Cool Sense pauses there?
Whilst, working from the Heart, the fire I trace,
And mark it strongly flaming to the Face ;
Whilst, in each sound, I hear the very man ;
I can't catch words, and pity those who can.

Let Wits, like Spiders, from the tortur'd brain
Fine-draw the critic-web with curious pain ;
The gods,—a kindness I with thanks must pay,—
Have form'd me of a coarser kind of clay ;
Nor stung with Envy, nor with Spleen diseas'd,
A poor dull creature, still with Nature pleas'd ;
Hence to thy praises, Garrick, I agree,
And, pleas'd with Nature, must be pleas'd with Thee.

Now might I tell, how silence reign'd throughout,
And deep attention hush'd the rabble rout :
How ev'ry claimant, tortur'd with desire,
Was pale as ashes, or as red as fire :
But, loose to Fame, the Muse more simply acts,
Rejects all flourish, and relates mere facts.

The Judges, as the sev'ral parties came,
With Temper heard, with Judgment weigh'd each claim,
And, in their sentence happily agreed,
In name of both, Great Shakespeare thus decreed.

“ If manly Sense ; if Nature link'd with Art,
“ If thorough knowledge of the Human Heart ;
“ If Pow'rs of Acting vast and unconfin'd ;
“ If fewest Faults with greatest Beauties join'd ;
“ If strong Expression, and strange Pow'rs, which lie
“ Within the magic circle of the eye ;
“ If feelings which few hearts, like his, can know,
“ And which no face so well as His can show ;
“ Deserve the Pref'rence ;—Garrick take the Chair ;
“ Nor quit it—till Thou place an Equal there.”

THE END.



THE CRITICAL REVIEW ON THE ROSCIAD.

[This notice, which appeared at the end of March, 1761, so infuriated Churchill that he wrote his *Apology* in answer to it, or rather in revenge for it.]

THE *Rosciad* is a well-written, ill-natured, ingenious, abusive poem ; levelled principally against a set of men, whom, as not being able to return the compliment, it was rather ungenerous to attack ; namely, the inferior players of the two theatres. It may perhaps be a matter of triumph to a young officer to rout these *raggamuffins*, but surely an able general would scarcely have thought them worth powder and shot : W—d, H—d, P—r, S—r, A—n, S—h, R—s, and in short the whole groupe of second, third, fourth and fifth-rate actors, are most severely handled, their ¹ *theatrical* faults placed in the most glaring light, and even their ² *private* foibles malevolently ridiculed and exposed. The observations with regard to their respective merits are, for the most part, just, tho' not new, being indeed no more than the eccho of the critics in every coffee-house, put into tolerable good rhyme. The whole drift of the performance seems to be plainly and indisputably this : first, to throw all the players, like so many faggots, into a pile, and set fire to them by way of a sacrifice to the modern Roscius ; and, secondly, to do the same by all the wits and poets of the age, in compliment to *Messieurs Lloyd and Colman*, the heroes of the piece. Mr. G—— is seated between these two gentlemen,

“ ——— like Hercules
Supported by the pillars he had rais'd.”

There he receives incense, which they stuff up his nostrils at a most profuse rate : tho' Mr. G——, after all, wants no such support, nor desires to receive such incense, and is, we doubt not, by this time, heartily sick of the perpetual

¹ Here are quoted, in a note, the lines on Havard and Davies (pp. 15 and 16).

² Quoting the lines on Palmer (p. 17, *note* ¹.) in a note, the Reviewer says, “ This is gross and illiberal, and such language as a polite writer would never condescend to make use of.”

perfume; but it is the fate of theatrical, as of other monarchs, to suffer more flattery, as well as more abuse, than all their subjects. The author, however, has spared a little *flummery* for two or three favourite subalterns. Mrs. Clive is complimented highly.

“In spight of outward blemishes she shone
For Humour fam’d, and Humour all her own.
Easy, as if at home, the stage she trod,
Nor sought the Critic’s praise, nor fear’d his rod.
Original in spirit and in ease,
She pleas’d by hiding all attempts to please.
No comic actress ever yet could raise,
On Humour’s base, more merit or more praise.”

The lines describing the inimitable Cibber are expressive of her character, and extremely poetical.

“Form’d for the tragic scene, to grace the stage,
With rival excellence of Love and Rage,
Mistress of each soft art, with matchless skill
To turn and wind the passions as she will;
To melt the heart with sympathetic woe,
Awake the sigh, and teach the tear to flow;
To put on Frenzy’s wild distracted glare,
And freeze the soul with horror and despair;
Nobly disdainful of each slavish art,
She makes her first attack upon the heart:
Pleas’d with the summons, it receives her laws,
And all is silence, sympathy, applause.”

Mrs. Pritchard comes in likewise for her share of deserved praise, which the author, we suppose, was more ready to bestow on her, as it gave him an opportunity of introducing an encomium on the *Jealous Wife*:—

“The Jealous Wife!—On that thy trophies raise,
Inferior only to the Author’s praise.”

Though our author, as we see by the above quotations, now and then deviates into panegyric, he quickly returns to his dearly beloved *satire*, which, like another *Drawcansir*, he deals about most furiously on friends and foes: all F—te’s merit lies in *distortion*, and W—d’s in *grimace*.

“ Merit he had, some merit in his way,
But seldom found out in what part it lay : ” ¹

which, by the bye, are two of the baldest lines in the whole performance.

B—y, if we believe this severe critic, has no merit : Y—s is an imperfect blunderer; and K—g *shines in brass*. H—nd is a *Garrick* at second-hand; and O—n only an imitator of W—d’s defects. The admirers of Q—n, both as an actor and a man, will be sorry to see their old friend thus severely handled :

“ His eyes, in ² gloomy socket taught to roll,
Proclaim’d the sullen habit of his soul.
Heavy and phlegmatic he trod the stage,
Too proud for tenderness, too dull for rage.
“ From the tame scene which without passion flows,
With just desert his reputation rose,
Nor less he pleas’d, when, on some surly plan,
He was, at once, the Actor and the Man.
In whate’er cast his character was laid,
Self still, like oil, upon the surface played.
Nature, in spite of all his skill, crept in :
Horatio, Dorax, Falstaff,—still ’twas Q—n.”

Mr. Q—n’s friends (amongst whom we shall be proud to count ourselves) can only say in answer to this, that if he is really possessed of half the honesty, sincerity, wit, humour, and good-nature of these characters, which this writer seems to insinuate he *is*, he is certainly a most worthy and amiable man; but this we leave to those who have heard him on the stage, and known him in private life. With regard to the influence which his *natural* turn of mind has on his *assumed* character, we shall only observe, that *nature* (as our author observes) will always creep in. It is *natural* for young authors to conceive themselves the cleverest fellows in the world, and withal, that there is not the least degree of merit subsisting but in their *own* works : it is *natural* likewise for them to imagine, that they may conceal themselves by appearing in different shapes, and that they are not to be found out by their stile; but little do these *connoisseurs* in writing conceive, how easily they are discovered by a veteran in the service.

In the title-page to this performance we are told, (by way of quaint conceit) that it was written by *the Author*; what if it should prove that the author and

¹ Churchill cut out these lines in the later editions.

² “ Concerning this gloomy habit of his soul, we must refer our readers to Mr. Q—’s bottle companions, who, we believe, will give a very different account of it.” (Note in *Critical Review*).

the ¹ actor are the same! Certain it is, that we meet with the *same* vein of humour, the same facility of versification, the same turn of thought, the same affected contempt of the ancients, the same extravagant praise of the moderns, the same *autophilism* (there's a new word for you to bring into your next poem) which we meet with in the other.

“When in discoursing of each mimic elf,
We praise and censure with an eye to *self* ;”

Insomuch that we are ready to make the conclusion in the author's own words :

“Who is it?—LLOYD.”

We will not pretend, however, absolutely to assert, that Mr. L—— wrote this poem ; but we may venture to affirm, that it is the production, jointly or separately, of the new triumvirate of wits, who never let an opportunity pass of singing their own praises. *Caw me, caw thee*, as Sawney says, and so to it they go, and *scratch* one another like so many Scotch pedlars.

After all we are so far from denying the merit of this little piece, that we recommend it to our readers as a very ingenious performance ; but at the same time cannot help crying out, with one who was formerly reckoned a tolerable good poet,

“Curs'd be the verse, how well soe'er it flow,
That tends to make *one* worthy man my *foe*.”

The author of this, we think, has made many such : we would advise him therefore to put less gall into his ink, and make use of a softer pen for the future.

¹ “See a very pretty poem with that title, printed not long since.” (Note in *Critical Review*.)



THE APOLOGY.

ADDRESSED TO THE CRITICAL REVIEWERS.

Tristitiam et metus
Tradam protervis in mare CRITICUM
Portare ventis.

LAUGHS not the heart, when Giants, big with pride,
Assume the pompous port, the martial stride ;
O'er arm Herculean heave th' enormous shield ;
Vast as a weaver's beam the javelin wield ;
With the loud voice of thund'ring Jove defy,
And dare to single combat—What ?—A Fly.

And laugh we less, when Giant names, which shine
Establish'd, as it were, by right divine ;
Critics, whom ev'ry captive art adores,
To whom glad Science pours forth all her stores ;
Who high in letter'd reputation sit,
And hold, Astræa like, the scales of Wit ;
With partial rage rush forth,—Oh ! shame to tell !
To crush a bard just bursting from the shell ?

Great are his perils in this stormy time
Who rashly ventures on a sea of Rime.
Around vast surges roll, winds envious blow,
And jealous rocks and quicksands lurk below,
Greatly his foes he dreads, but more his friends ;
He hurts me most who lavishly commends.

Look thro' the world—in ev'ry other trade
The same employment's cause of kindness made,
At least appearance of good will creates,
And ev'ry fool puffs off the fool he hates.
Cobblers with cobblers smoke away the night,
And in the common cause e'en Play'rs unite.
Authors alone, with more than savage rage,
Unnat'ral war with brother authors wage.
The pride of Nature would as soon admit
Competitors in empire as in wit :
Onward they rush at Fame's imperious call,
And, less than greatest, would not be at all.

Smit with the love of Honour,—or the Pence,
O'er run with wit, and destitute of sense,
Should any novice in the riming trade,
With lawless pen the realms of verse invade ;
Forth from the court, where scepter'd sages sit,
Abus'd with praise, and flatter'd into wit :
Where in lethargic majesty they reign,

And what they won by dullness, still maintain ;
Legions of factious authors throng at once ;
Fool beckons fool, and dunce awakens dunce.
To Hamilton's ¹ the Ready Lies repair ;—
Ne'er was Lie made which was not welcome there—
Thence, on maturer judgment's anvil wrought,
The polish'd falshood's into public brought.
Quick-circulating slanders mirth afford,
And reputation bleeds in ev'ry word.

A critic was of old a glorious name,
Whose sanction handed merit up to fame ;
Beauties as well as faults he brought to view :
His Judgment great, and great his Candour too.
No servile rules drew sickly taste aside ;
Secure he walk'd, for Nature was his guide.
But now, Oh strange reverse! our Critics bawl
In praise of Candour with a heart of Gall,
Conscious of guilt, and fearful of the light,
They lurk enshrouded in the veil of night :
Safe from detection, seize th' unwary prey,
And stab, like bravoës, all who come that way.

When first my Muse, perhaps more bold than wise,
Bad the rude trifle into light arise,
Little she thought such tempests would ensue,
Less, that those tempests would be rais'd by you.

¹ Archibald Hamilton, the publisher of the Critical Review.

The thunder's fury rends the tow'ring oak,
 Rosciads, like shrubs, might 'scape the fatal stroke.
 Vain thought ! a Critic's fury knows no bound ;
 Drawcansir like, he deals destruction round ;
 Nor can we hope he will a stranger spare,
 Who gives no quarter to his friend Voltaire.'

Unhappy Genius ! plac'd by partial Fate
 With a free spirit in a slavish state ;
 Where the reluctant Muse, oppress'd by kings,
 Or droops in silence, or in fetters sings.
 In vain thy dauntless fortitude hath borne
 The bigot's furious zeal, and tyrant's scorn.
 Why didst thou safe from home-bred dangers steer,
 Reserv'd to perish more ignobly here ?
 Thus, when the Julian Tyrant's pride to swell
 Rome with her Pompey at Pharsalia fell,
 The vanquish'd chief escap'd from Cæsar's hand
 To die by ruffians in a foreign land.

How could these self-elected monarchs raise
 So large an empire on so small a base ?
 In what retreat, inglorious and unknown,
 Did Genius sleep, when Dullness seiz'd the throne ?

¹ " Dr. Smollett having about this time discovered, began to inveigh against the tendency of Voltaire's writings, and though he had on former occasions bestowed high encomiums on his genius and assumed patriotism, now denied him the former, and termed the latter inflammatory and seditious." Note by Tooke in his edition of Churchill, 1804.

Whence, absolute now grown, and free from awe,
She to the subject world dispenses law.
Without her licence, not a letter stirs,
And all the captive criss-cross-row¹ is hers.
The Stagyrite, who rules from Nature drew,
Opinions gave, but gave his reasons too.
Our great Dictators take a shorter way—
Who shall dispute what the Reviewers say?
Their word's sufficient; and to ask a reason,
In such a state as theirs, is downright treason.
True judgment now with Them alone can dwell;
Like Church of Rome, they're grown infallible.
Dull superstitious readers they deceive,
Who pin their easy faith on critic's sleeve,
And, knowing nothing, ev'ry thing believe!
But why repine we, that these Puny Elves
Shoot into Giants?—We may thank ourselves;
Fools that we are, like Israel's fools of yore,
The Calf ourselves have fashion'd we adore.
But let true Reason once resume her reign,
This God shall dwindle to a Calf again.

Founded on arts which shun the face of day,
By the same arts they still maintain their sway.
Wrapp'd in mysterious secresy they rise,

¹ Christ-cross-row—the Alphabet : so named from the cross which used to be printed before it, or from a superstitious custom of writing it in the form of a cross, by way of a charm.

And, as they are unknown, are safe and wise.
At whomsoever aim'd, howe'er severe
Th' envenom'd slander flies, no names appear.
Prudence forbid that step.—Then all might know
And on more equal terms engage the foe.
But now, what Quixote of the age would care
To wage a war with dirt, and fight with air?
By int'rest join'd, th' expert confederates stand,
And play the game into each other's hand.
The vile abuse, in turn by all deny'd,
Is bandy'd up and down from side to side :
It flies—hey !—presto !—like a jugler's ball,
'Till it belongs to nobody at all.

All men and things they know, themselves unknown,
And publish ev'ry name—except their own.
Nor think this strange—secure from vulgar eyes
The nameless author passes in disguise.
But vet'ran critics are not so deceiv'd,
If vet'ran critics are to be believ'd.
Once seen, they know an author evermore,
Nay swear to hands they never saw before.
Thus in the Rosciad, beyond chance or doubt,
They, by the writing, found the writers out.
“That's Lloyd's—his manner there you plainly trace,
“And all the Actor stares you in the face.
“By Colman that was written.—On my life,
“The strongest symptoms of the Jealous Wife.



R. Dighton Pinx

R. Laurie Sculp

Q. H. 175



J. Yates

“That little disingenuous piece of spite,
 “Churchill, a wretch unknown, perhaps might write.”
 How doth it make judicious readers smile,
 When authors are detected by their stile :
 Tho’ ev’ry one who knows this author, knows
 He shifts his stile much oftener than his cloaths ?

Whence could arise this mighty critic spleen,
 The Muse a trifler, and her theme so mean ?
 What had I done, that angry Heav’n should send
 The bitt’rest Foe where most I wish’d a Friend ?
 Oft hath my tongue been wanton at thy name,
 And hail’d the honours of thy matchless fame.
 For me let hoary Fielding bite the ground
 So nobler Pickle stands superbly bound.
 From Livy’s temples tear th’ historic crown,
 Which with more justice blooms upon thine own.
 Compar’d with thee, be all life-writers dumb,
 But he who wrote the Life of Tommy Thumb.
 Who ever read the Regicide,¹ but swore
 The author wrote as man ne’er wrote before ?
 Others for plots and under-plots may call,
 Here’s the right method—have no plot at all.
 Who can so often in his cause engage

¹ *The Regicide ; or, James the First of Scotland*, a tragedy by Dr. Smollett, which no manager would produce. It was printed by subscription, at five shillings a copy, in 1749, and in the preface the author complains bitterly of the treatment he had received from the managers.

The tiny Pathos of the Grecian stage,
 Whilst horrors rise, and tears spontaneous flow
 At tragic Ha ! and no less tragic Oh !
 To praise his nervous weakness all agree ;
 And then for sweetness, who so sweet as he !
 Too big for utterance when sorrows swell
 The too big sorrows flowing tears must tell :
 But when those flowing tears shall cease to flow,
 Why—then the voice must speak again you know.

Rude and unskilful in the Poet's trade,
 I kept no Naiads by me ready-made ;¹
 Ne'er did I colours high in air advance ;
 Torn from the bleeding fopperies of France ;
 No flimsey linsey-woolsey scenes I wrote,
 With patches here and there like Joseph's coat.
 Me humbler themes befit : Secure, for me,
 Let Playwrights smuggle nonsense, duty free :²
 Secure, for me, ye lambs, ye lambkins bound,
 And frisk, and frolic o'er the fairy ground :
 Secure, for me, thou pretty little fawn,
 Lick Sylvia's hand,³ and crop the flow'ry lawn ;

¹ This paragraph is an attack on Arthur Murphy.

² In an abusive pamphlet on Murphy (published 1761), he was described as "a celebrated Wit Stealer and Dramatic Smuggler."

³ Sylvia and her fawn occur in Murphy's play, *The Desert Island*, to which Churchill makes several allusions.

Uncensur'd let the gentle breezes rove,
Thro' the green umbrage of th' enchanted grove ;
Secure, for me, let foppish Nature smile,
And play the coxcomb in 'the Desart Isle.

The stage I chose—a subject fair and free—
Tis yours—'tis mine—'tis Public Property.
All Common Exhibitions open lie
For Praise or Censure to the Common Eye.
Hence are a thousand Hackney-writers fed ;
Hence Monthly Critics earn their Daily-Bread.
This is a gen'ral tax which all must pay,
From those who scribble, down to those who play.
Actors, a venal crew, receive support
From public bounty, for the public sport.
To clap or hiss, all have an equal claim,
The cobbler's and his lordship's right the same.
All join for their subsistence ; all expect
Free leave to praise their worth, their faults correct.
When active Pickle Smithfield stage ascends,
The three days wonder of his laughing friends ;
Each, or as judgment, or as fancy guides,
The lively witling praises or derides.
And where's the mighty difference, tell me where,
Betwixt a Merry Andrew and a Play'r ?

The strolling tribe, a despicable race,
Like wand'ring Arabs, shift from place to place.

Vagrants by law,¹ to Justice open laid,
 They tremble, of the beadle's lash afraid,
 And fawning cringe, for wretched means of life,
 To Madam May'ress, or his Worship's Wife.

The mighty monarch, in theatric sack,
 Carries his whole regalia at his back ;
 His royal consort heads the female band,
 And leads the heir-apparent in her hand ;
 The pannier'd ass creeps on with conscious pride,
 Bearing a future prince on either side.
 No choice musicians in this troop are found
 To varnish nonsense with the charms of sound ;
 No swords, no daggers, not one poison'd bowl ;
 No lightning flashes here, no thunders roll ;
 No guards to swell the monarch's train are shown ;
 The monarch here must be a host alone.
 No solemn pomp, no slow processions here ;
 No Ammon's entry, and no Juliet's bier.²

By need compell'd to prostitute his art,
 The varied actor flies from part to part ;
 And, strange disgrace to all theatric pride !

¹ By the well known Act of George II.

² Two of the regular opportunities for show and spectacle in the larger theatres are here mentioned : the triumphal entry of Alexander (*Rival Queens*), and the Funeral Procession of Juliet, which used to open the fifth act of *Romeo and Juliet*.

His character is shifted with his side.
Question and Answer he by turns must be,
Like that small wit in Modern Tragedy ;¹
Who, to patch up his fame,—or fill his purse,—
Still pilfers wretched plans, and makes them worse ;
Like gypsies, lest the stolen brat be known,
Defacing first, then claiming for his own.
In shabby state they strut, and tatter'd robe ;
The scene a blanket, and a barn the globe.
No high conceits their mod'rate wishes raise,
Content with humble profit, humble praise.
Let dowdies simper, and let bumpkins stare,
The strolling pageant hero treads in air :
Pleas'd for his hour he to mankind gives law,
And snores the next out on a truss of straw.

But if kind Fortune, who we sometimes know
Can take a hero from a puppet-show,
In mood propitious should her fav'rite call,
On royal stage in royal pomp to bawl,
Forgetful of himself he rears the head,
And scorns the dunghill where he first was bred.
Conversing now with well-dress'd kings and queens,
With gods and goddesses behind the scenes,
He sweats beneath the terror-nodding plume,
Taught by Mock Honours Real Pride t'assume.

¹ Murphy again.

On this great stage the World, no Monarch e'er
Was half so haughty as a Monarch-Play'r.

Doth it more move our anger or our mirth,
To see these Things, the lowest sons of earth,
Presume, with self-sufficient knowledge grac'd,
To rule in Letters, and preside in Taste ?
The Town's decisions they no more admit,
Themselves alone the Arbiters of Wit ;
And scorn the jurisdiction of that Court,
To which they owe their being and support.
Actors, like monks of old, now sacred grown,
Must be attack'd by no fools but their own.

Let the Vain Tyrant¹ sit amidst his guards,
His puny Green-room Wits and Venal Bards,
Who meanly tremble at the Puppet's frown,
And for a Playhouse Freedom lose their own ;
In spite of new-made Laws, and new-made Kings,
The free-born Muse with lib'ral spirit sings.
Bow down, ye Slaves ; before these Idols fall ;
Let Genius stoop to them who've none at all ;
Ne'er will I flatter, cringe, or bend the knee
To those who, Slaves to All, are Slaves to Me.

Actors, as Actors, are a lawful game ;
The poet's right ; and Who shall bar his claim ?

¹ For the reason of this vigorous slash at Garrick, see Introduction.

And if, o'er-weening of their little skill,
 When they have left the Stage, they're Actors still;
 If to the subject world they still give laws,
 With paper crowns, and sceptres made of straws;
 If they in cellar or in garret roar,
 And Kings one night, are Kings for evermore;
 Shall not bold Truth, e'en there, pursue her theme,
 And wake the Coxcomb from his golden dream?
 Or if, well worthy of a better fate,
 They rise superior to their present state;
 If, with each social virtue grac'd, they blend
 The gay companion and the faithful friend:¹
 If they, like Pritchard, join in private life
 The tender parent and the virtuous wife;
 Shall not our Verse their praise with pleasure speak,
 Though Mimics bark, and Envy splits her cheek?
 No honest worth's beneath the Muse's praise;
 No greatness can above her censure raise;
 Station and wealth to her are trifling things;
 She stoops to Actors, and she soars to Kings.

Is there a man, in vice and folly bred,
 To sense of honour as to virtue dead;
 Whom ties nor human, nor divine, can bind;
 Alien to God, and foe to all mankind;

¹ On these four lines the *St. James's Chronicle* of 21 May, 1761, remarks:—
 "We must beg leave to observe from our own knowledge that these lines are
 very applicable in particular to Mr. Ross of Covent Garden Theatre."

Who spares no character ; whose ev'ry word,
Bitter as gall, and sharper than the sword,
Cuts to the quick ; whose thoughts with rancour swell :
Whose tongue, on earth, performs the work of Hell ?
If there be such a monster, the Reviews
Shall find him holding forth against Abuse.
“ Attack Profession !—’tis a deadly breach !—
“ The Christian laws another lesson teach :—
“ Unto the End shall charity endure,
“ And Candour hide those faults it cannot cure.”
Thus Candour’s maxims flow from Rancour’s throat,
As devils, to serve their purpose, Scripture quote.¹

The Muse’s office was by Heav’n design’d,
To please, improve, instruct, reform mankind ;
To make dejected Virtue nobly rise
Above the tow’ring pitch of splendid Vice ;
To make pale Vice, abash’d, her head hang down,
And trembling crouch at Virtue’s awful frown.
Now arm’d with wrath, she bids eternal shame,
With strictest justice, brand the villain’s name :
Now in the milder garb of Ridicule
She sports, and pleases while she wounds the Fool.
Her shape is often varied ; but her aim,
To prop the cause of Virtue, still the same.
In praise of Mercy let the Guilty bawl,

¹ This furious onslaught is directed at Smollett.

When Vice and Folly for Correction call ;
Silence the mark of weakness justly bears,
And is partaker of the crimes it spares.

But if the Muse, too cruel in her mirth,
With harsh reflections wounds the man of worth ;
If wantonly she deviates from her plan,
And quits the Actor to expose the Man ;
Asham'd, she marks that passage with a blot,
And hates the line where Candour was forgot.¹

But what is Candour, what is Humour's vein,
Tho' Judgment join to consecrate the strain,
If curious numbers will not aid afford,
Nor choicest music play in ev'ry word ?
Verses must run, to charm a modern ear,
From all harsh, rugged interruptions clear.
Soft let them breathe, as Zephyr's balmy breeze ;
Smooth let their current flow, as summer seas ;
Perfect then only deem'd when they dispense
A happy tuneful vacancy of sense.
Italian fathers thus, with barb'rous rage,
Fit helpless infants for the squeaking stage ;
Deaf to the calls of pity, Nature wound,
And mangle vigour for the sake of sound.

¹ A graceful apology for the lines on John Palmer, which Churchill suppressed in the second edition of the *Rosciad*. See *ante*, page 17, note ¹.

Henceforth farewell then fev'rish thirst of fame ;
Farewell the longings for a Poet's name ;
Perish my Muse ;—a wish 'bove all severe
To him who ever held the Muses dear—
If e'er her labours weaken to refine
The gen'rous roughness of a nervous line.

Others affect the stiff and swelling phrase ;
Their Muse must walk in stilts, and strut in stays :
The sense they murder, and the words transpose,
Lest Poetry approach too near to Prose.
See, tortur'd Reason how they pare and trim,
And, like Procrustes, stretch, or lop the limb.

Waller, whose praise succeeding bards rehearse,
Parent of harmony in English verse,
Whose tuneful Muse in sweetest accents flows,
In couplets first taught straggling sense to close.

In polish'd numbers, and majestic sound,
Where shall thy rival, Pope, be ever found ?
But whilst each line with equal beauty flows,
E'en excellence, unvaried, tedious grows.
Nature, thro' all her works, in great degree,
Borrows a blessing from Variety.
Music itself her needful aid requires
To rouze the soul, and wake our dying fires.
Still in one key, the Nightingale would teize :
Still in one key, not Brent would always please.

Here let me bend, great Dryden, at thy shrine,
 Thou dearest name to all the tuneful nine.
 What if some dull lines in cold order creep,
 And with his theme the poet seems to sleep,
 Still, when his subject rises proud to view,
 With equal strength the Poet rises too.
 With strong invention, noblest vigour fraught,
 Thought still springs up and rises out of thought;
 Numbers ennobling numbers in their course,
 In varied sweetness flow, in varied force;
 The pow'rs of Genius and of Judgment join,
 And the whole Art of Poetry is Thine.

But what are Numbers, what are Bards to me,
 Forbid to tread the paths of Poesy?
 "A sacred Muse should consecrate her pen;
 "Priests must not hear nor see like other men;
 "Far higher themes should her ambition claim;
 "Behold where Sternhold points the way to Fame."

Whilst, with mistaken zeal, dull bigots burn,
 Let Reason for a moment take her turn,
 When Coffee-sages hold discourse with kings,
 And blindly walk in Paper Leading-strings,

¹ "He complains also of being censured as a clergyman for indulging in the idleness of poetry; surely this complaint cannot affect the reviewer, who never enquired whether he was a priest or a publican, a curate or a cobbler; whether he spent his time in squabbling with the players behind the scenes at the theatre, or in *praying his pible* among the old women in Westminster."—*Critical Review*, for May, 1761.


What if a man delight to pass his time
In spinning Reason into harmless Rime ;
Or sometimes boldly venture to the Play ?
Say, Where's the Crime ?—great Man of Prudence, say ?
No two on earth in all things can agree ;
All have some darling singularity ;
Women and men, as well as girls and boys,
In Gew-gaws take delight, and sigh for toys.
Your sceptres, and your crowns, and such like things,
Are but a better kind of toys for kings.
In things indiff'rent Reason bids us chuse,
Whether the whim's a Monkey, or a Muse.

What the grave triflers on this busy scene,
When they make use of the word Reason, mean,
I know not ; but, according to my plan,
'Tis Lord-chief-justice in the Court of Man,
Equally form'd to rule in age or youth,
The Friend of Virtue, and the Guide to Truth.
To Her I bow, whose sacred pow'r I feel ;
To Her decision make my last appeal ;
Condemn'd by Her, applauding worlds in vain
Should tempt me to take up the pen again :
By Her absolv'd, my course I'll still pursue :
If Reason's for me, God is for me too.

THE END.



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